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Cypriotism in the 21st Century Republic of Cyprus

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology

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March 2023

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my grandmother, Marina Michael, whose kindness, compassionate spirit, and love for life has taught me more than any degree ever could.

Acknowledgements

The writing of this thesis would not have been possible without the excellent supervision, insightful comments, and careful guidance of Dr. Nisha Kapoor and Dr. John Solomos. A special thanks must be further extended here to the doctoral students of the Department of Sociology at the University of Warwick, and in particular to Hannah Ayres, Gabriel(e) du Plessis, Simon Arthur, Sun Park and Carys Hill, for their help during the past year. I would like to also express here my everlasting gratitude to my parents Charis Pastellopoulos and Stalo Pastellopoulou, whose unconditional love and support during all these years has made this possible.

The long period of study leading to the writing of this thesis took place during the covid-19 pandemic, a difficult period which coincided with some of the darkest years of my life. For their support, friendship, kindness, and patience, I would like to express here my appreciation and gratitude to Virginia Sakka, Haris Stylianides, Mikaella Karakondylou, Christina Karakondylou, Nicos Moushouttas, Andrea Pantelidou, Alexis Ioannides, Lizzy Ioannidou, Panayiota Shoshilou, Giorgos Anastasiou, Pedro Shiammas, Andri Gregoriou, Christophoros Pissarides, Louisa Lazarou, George Petrou, Nicolas Pastellopoulos, Maja Jajszczok, Lucia Lucchini, Alexandros Gregoriou, Anna Karligkioti, Nicolas Demetriou, Johnie Lazarou, Michael Daniel, Anastasia Demetriou, Ayşe Yıldız, Rebecca Pericleous, and Antonia Maria Nicolaides.

A special note of gratitude much be reserved here for Bruna Do Rego Troccoli, who has made these last few months in Coventry worth remembering.

Declaration

The contents of this thesis are my own work, and no material from the thesis has been submitted for a degree at any other university.

Sections 1.2., 2.1., 2.3., 2.4., and 2.5. of the thesis were incorporated in the article ‘Cypriotism as a Political Ideology: Critical Contributions and Conceptual Limitations’ that was published in 2022 by the London School of Economics and Political Science, as part of the Hellenic Observatory’s GreeSE Discussion Paper Series (No. 178).

Abstract

The thesis analyses Cypriotism in the 21st century Republic of Cyprus, an ideological position which opposes Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism, aspiring instead for a common Cypriot identity that aims to transcend the historical and existing ethnic divisions connected to the island. Employing qualitative thematic analysis to assess political documents produced from 1999 to 2020, limited participant observation, as well as qualitative surveys carried out with individuals active in the grassroots politics of the Republic, the thesis explores key Cypriotist ideological claims, positions, and perceptions, critically exploring the ideology through the employment of concepts and theoretical insights developed primarily within the field of nationalism studies. By examining perceptions surrounding Cypriot identity, representations of native and non-native ethnic/cultural groups, claims surrounding the local Cypriot language varieties, re-narrations of historical events, and positions relating to the potential reunification of Cyprus, the thesis argues that Cypriotism is an alternative form of nationalism, formulating its own particular imagined community, with its corresponding limited membership, attachment to topography and desired form for the state, in opposition to the hegemonic nationalisms existing in Cyprus. Nonetheless, contrary to the dominant interpretation found in the academic literature, the thesis argues that Cypriotism does not correspond to a civic version of nationalism. Recognising that nationalism, in its multiple expressions, entails a universal, as well as a contextual component, the thesis moves on to discuss Cypriotism in relation to the concepts of ‘ethnic nationalism’, ‘liberal nationalism’, and ‘multicultural nationalism’. Arguing that the ideological elements characterising Cypriotism cannot be subsumed adequately under these three concepts, the thesis concludes with the introduction of a new concept, that of ‘multicommunal nationalism’, as a new sub-category of nationalism.

History is one gigantic cemetery of names of states and nations which never attained autonomy, or which lost it.

— Étienne Balibar (1990: 335).

1. Introduction

This thesis explores and analyses Cypriotism, an ideological position present in the politics of the island of Cyprus, which opposes Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism, aspiring instead for a common Cypriot identity that aims to transcend the island's historical and existing ethnic divisions. Cyprus has remained of interest to the study of nationalism and national identity formation, primarily due to the persistency of the Cyprus Dispute, a political and ethnic conflict that has dominated the island's modern history. Attention to Cypriotism has however been relatively limited, with most contributions exploring Cypriotism primarily in relation to Greek/Turkish Cypriot nationalism and the Dispute itself, rather than as a consistent political ideology in its own right.

This thesis aims to alleviate this gap, by offering a comprehensive exploration of Cypriotism as it has been expressed within the Greek Cypriot community of the island; in the 21st century Republic of Cyprus. Its empirical findings are grounded in social research conducted in Cyprus for sixteen consecutive months, which included collecting political documents, conducting limited participant observation at public protests, and collecting qualitative surveys, completed by individuals active in the grassroots politics of the Republic. Building upon theoretical insights developed in the field of nationalism studies, this thesis examines the peculiar ways through which Cypriotism formulates an alternative imagined community entailing its own corresponding cultural claims, demarcations of inclusion and exclusion, historical narration and visions over the state. During the long process of data collection, coding and analysis, the research has been guided by the following two research questions:

1. To what extent does Cypriotism act as an alternative and as a challenge to Greek Cypriot nationalism?
2. Is Cypriotism an alternative to nationalism, or a variant expression of it?

The first research question aims to guide the research in the social and political context within which it was conducted, exploring how Cypriotism contrasts and differentiates itself within the Greek Cypriot community from the hegemonic form of nationalism that it fiercely opposes. In contrast, the second research question aimed to examine Cypriotism as a social phenomenon, exploring whether it could be sufficiently described through the conceptual framework developed in nationalism studies, or if its entailed elements and characteristics place it outside of this theoretical scope. Therefore, the second research question constitutes

the “What is this a case of?” (Prasad 2021: 86) question of this thesis, aiming to identify, address, and conceptualise the type of social phenomenon that Cypriotism reflects.

1.1. Outline of the Thesis

The thesis is organised thematically, with each empirical chapter reflecting a key theme identified through a five-stage coding process. A historical contextualisation is included at the end of this introductory chapter, providing the necessary historical background for readers unfamiliar with the complexity characterising the Cypriot context. Rather than providing a long contextualisation in the introduction, additional detailed contextual information has been included in Chapters 4 to 8, which constitute the empirical findings of the thesis, with the purpose of enabling readers to follow each chapter’s argument without the constant need of returning to this introduction for clarifications.

The academic literature surrounding nationalism is examined in chapter 2, which explores a series of key concepts utilised in the field of nationalism studies, including those of ‘imagined community’, ‘nation form’, ‘banal nationalism’, and ‘everyday nationhood’. The chapter moves on to outline and evaluate a set of proposed ‘types’ of nationalism, particularly civic, ethnic, liberal, and multicultural nationalism. The discussion subsequently shifts its attention towards the literature surrounding Cyprus, outlining key contributions in the study of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism, moving on to focus on the various contributions that have been made in the study of Cypriotism. Following an evaluation of the available scholarship, the chapter concludes by offering an updated definition of Cypriotism, incorporating critical insights located in the literature.

Chapter 3 outlines the employed methodology of the research. Following a discussion on epistemology and positionality, the chapter presents the types of collected data utilised, namely documents, data generated from limited participatory observation and qualitative surveys, outlining how each data type was collected. The data are then further detailed, providing relevant information surrounding the collected political magazines, the types of public protests observed during the data collection period, and general information surrounding participants. The chapter moves on to discuss the ethical approach that guided the research during and after data collection, noting the unique challenges created by the covid-19 pandemic, which gave rise to additional considerations in relation to ethical

conduct. The chapter concludes by detailing the coding process employed, which enabled the identification of key themes, upon which the empirical chapters have been based.

Chapter 4 constitutes the first empirical chapter, examining senses of Cypriotness identified in the collected data. The chapter highlights how Cypriot identity is intrinsically attached to the geographical territory of the island, remaining largely defined through its differentiation from Greek and Turkish national identity, constituting Cypriotness as independent and autonomous from Greekness and Turkishness. It further explores the various ways in which Cypriot identity is perceived to be inherently pluralistic and culturally heterogeneous, leaving Cypriotness itself largely undefined. Noting that at certain points the very notion of 'identity' is questioned or downplayed, the chapter further highlights how Cypriotness is claimed in an antagonistic relation to Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism, challenging their corresponding notions of national collective belonging.

Chapter 5 explores Cypriotist political discourse, examining how population groups external to the Greek Cypriot community are represented in the collected documents. Focusing on representations of the Turkish Cypriot community, the Cypriot Roma, the migrant population and the category of the (Turkish) 'settler', the chapter demonstrates the ways in which the category of the 'Cypriot people' is discursively constructed by demarcating distinct lines of inclusion and exclusion for each population group. Notably, the chapter explores how the Turkish Cypriot community is designated as an integral part of the category, being assigned equal political stature to its Greek Cypriot counterpart, in contrast to other population groups, which are demarcated as 'outsiders' to the category. While being located outside the category, the Cypriot Roma and the migrant population are generally represented positively, reflecting a general commitment of Cypriotism to a progressive, anti-racist mode of politics. Nonetheless, the chapter further examines the ways in which individuals subsumed under the category of the 'settler' are represented overwhelmingly negatively, indicating the limits to inclusion reflected in the imagined community expressed by Cypriotism.

Chapter 6 explores perceptions surrounding language use in Cyprus, focusing primarily on the ways local Cypriot language varieties are employed as identity markers for differentiation, culturally distinguishing Cyprus from Greece and Turkey. The chapter identifies two distinct perspectives surrounding language, a bi-communal perspective, which tends to prioritize the Cypriot Greek and Cypriot Turkish language varieties; placing them on an equal symbolic footing, and a pluralistic perspective, which implicitly rejects the

prioritisation of two language varieties, emphasising a multiplicity of language varieties instead. The chapter further highlights the convergence of these two perspectives, which prioritise and claim as Cypriot the language varieties associated with population groups commonly accepted as native to the island, in contrast to languages employed by migrants, which are not claimed as part of a Cypriot pluralistic cultural landscape.

Chapter 7 examines alternative narration over history, focusing initially on narratives challenging competing Greek Cypriot nationalist historical narratives, placing Cypriotness in historical time through the production of alternative political genealogies that reinterpret past historical figures and events. The chapter moves on to explore narrations surrounding victimhood and historical responsibility, noting how Cypriotist narratives challenge claims of exclusive victimhood dominant within the Greek Cypriot community, by acknowledging the Turkish Cypriot dead and missing as fellow victims of the Cyprus Dispute, as well as by emphasising the historical violence inflicted by the Greek Cypriot community upon the Turkish Cypriot community. The chapter moves on to further discuss how these narrations tend to also extend historical responsibility for the unfoldment of the conflict to the Greek Cypriot community. The chapter concludes by noting how the challenging of dominant Greek Cypriot nationalist narration articulates alternative visions over Cyprus' past, which in turn alter and influence visions surrounding its future.

Chapter 8 focuses on perspectives surrounding the prospect of establishing a reunified Cyprus under the proposed bi-communal federal model, noting that Cypriotist positions present the model as the ideal institutional arrangement for the reunification of the island. Discussing these perspectives in more detail, the chapter highlights their inherent rejection of majoritarianism, their preference towards the establishment of communal autonomy, and their support for the entrenchment of communal political equality within the institutions of the state, further noting how the materialisation of a reunified federal Cyprus is represented as a pivotal moment in the struggle against Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism. The chapter also examines perspectives surrounding the continuation of the status quo, noting how its reproduction is largely attributed to the entrenchment of elite interests opposing reunification, the hegemony of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism, and the absence of broad social pressure in favour of the island's reunification.

Chapter 9 discusses the key findings of the thesis, situating them within the broader literature surrounding Cypriotism. After reintroducing the revised definition of Cypriotism and the two

key research questions, it moves on to explore the various ways in which Cypriotism acts as an alternative and as a challenge to Greek Cypriot nationalism. In formulating a fundamentally different perspective surrounding (Cypriot) identity, culture, historical narration and belonging, the chapter argues that Cypriotism produces and reproduces an alternative imagined community, conflicting with key ideological elements located in Greek Cypriot nationalism, preventing its transfiguration into a banal expression of nationalism. The chapter continues its discussion by examining Cypriotism as an expression of nationalism, noting its compatibility with key concepts employed in nationalism studies, concluding with the assessment that Cypriotism should be comprehended as an alternative expression of nationalism. The chapter moves on to evaluate Cypriotism in relation to concepts denoting distinct 'types' of nationalism, namely those of 'civic', 'ethnic', 'liberal', and 'multicultural nationalism'. Arguing that none of the aforementioned concepts can adequately describe Cypriotism, the chapter concludes with the formulation of the concept of 'multicommunal nationalism' as a new sub-category of nationalism.

Finally, chapter 10 acts as the conclusion of the thesis. After offering a summary of the main findings located in each preceding chapter, it moves on to outline the thesis' key limitations, noting that its findings reflect exclusively expressions of Cypriotism within the Greek Cypriot community, are constrained within a specific historical period, and do not necessarily reflect political action itself, as the thesis is primarily concerned with political ideas, rather than political praxis. The chapter concludes by briefly discussing potential fields for future research.

1.2. Historical Context

Located in the eastern Mediterranean, the island of Cyprus has historically been under the control of several empires, the latest being the Ottoman and the British empires. As Andrekos Varnava noted, Cypriots did not share a homogeneous identity when the Ottomans handed administrative control of the island to the British in 1878 (2012: 155). Instead, premodern identifications of religion and locality began to transition towards, and be subsumed under emerging national identities, as the island was socially and politically transformed during the early years of British colonialism (Varnava 2012: 190). This process was accelerated by extensive modernising reforms in the internal administration of Cypriot socio-political life, driving further the national homogenisation of the island's population. It was during the first

decade of British rule that political disputes over identity developed, concentrated initially within the Orthodox Christian community of the island, with two factions competing over political and ideological hegemony, the Hellenists, who represented the ideas of Greek nationalism, and the Orthodox-centrists, who stressed pre-national conceptions of Christianity as their political identity (Varnava 2012: 179-180). A similar dispute was to repeat itself later on in the 20th century among Cypriot Muslims, with Young Turks (and later on Kemalists) advocating for Turkish nationalism, in opposition to traditionalist Cypriot Muslim elites, whose positions of power depended upon Ottoman social, legal and political structures, as well as their consistent loyalty towards the British colonial administration (Nevzat 2005: 430-431).

The nationalists triumphed in both ideological disputes, dominating political, educational and religious institutions, paving the way for the development of a Greek and a Turkish national identity, each with its corresponding nationalist ideology, national aspirations and antithetical long-term aims (Ioannou 2020: 11). *Enosis* (union), the unification of the island with Greece, became the central aim of Greek Cypriot nationalism, which was in turn uncompromisingly opposed by Turkish Cypriot nationalism. Considering enosis an existential threat, Turkish Cypriot nationalists initially maintained their support for the prolongation of British rule, but eventually adopted the position of *taksim* (partition), demanding the partition of Cyprus upon ethnic lines (Loizides 2007: 174-175). As nationalism increasingly shaped Cypriot political life in the 20th century, the Greek Cypriots, constituting the majority of the population,[1] dominated the anti-colonial struggle and placed enosis as its core demand, bringing the two nationalisms into direct confrontation, as each nationalism aimed to assimilate Cyprus, either in part or as a whole, with its corresponding 'motherland' (Ioannou 2020: 14). Despite the initial support for independence by the emerging Cypriot labour movement, the Communist Party of Cyprus eventually switched its position towards enosis after the formation of the Progressive Party of Working People (AKEL), and by the 1940s, the political right and the political left were no longer contesting the central aim of the anti-colonial struggle (Kalantzopoulos 2018: 116). Rather, the hostility between right and left reflected opposing positions in relation to political strategy, ongoing class disputes, and a broader antagonism

[1] In the official 1960 census, held in the year that Cyprus received its independence, Greek Cypriots constituted 77% of the total population, while Turkish Cypriots constituted 18%, making the Turkish Cypriot community the largest minority (Mavratsas 1997: 734).

over hegemony, concluding in the 1950s with the Greek Cypriot nationalist right gaining hegemony over the anti-colonial struggle (Kızılyürek 2019: 106).

This confrontation was both manipulated by the British colonial administration and further fuelled by broader tensions between Greece and Turkey. The first pivotal moment of crisis arose during the Greek Cypriot anti-colonial, pro-enosis guerrilla campaign of the 1950s, as Turkish Cypriot nationalists responded with the formation of their own paramilitary units, an antagonistic process which deteriorated into inter-communal violence by 1958 (Ioannou 2020: 15). The use of political violence was not merely restricted to inter-communal hostilities, as the Cypriot left was also targeted, leading to the harassment, stigmatisation and killing of Cypriot leftists by anti-communist Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalist paramilitaries throughout the 1950s and 1960s (Demetriou 2019). What came to be known as the Cyprus Dispute was initially 'resolved' through a compromise between the various interested parties (Britain, Greece, Turkey and the two communities), by offering Cyprus its independence in 1960 under a bi-communal constitutional structure, which necessitated inter-communal collaboration for the functioning of the newly independent Republic of Cyprus (Salem 1992: 119). Despite securing independence, the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot political elites continued to pursue their antagonistic aims, leading to constitutional collapse and further inter-communal violence, with the most intensive fighting concentrated during 1963-64, the first wave of armed clashes following the establishment of the Republic.

This new cycle of violence concluded with Greek Cypriots retaining complete control over the state, while Turkish Cypriots were largely internally displaced, pushed into ethnically segregated enclaves, surrounded by Greek Cypriot military and paramilitary forces (Ekici 2019: 23). Remaining under political and economic isolation at various levels of intensity until 1974, the difficult life of the enclaves shaped the sense of collective belonging within the Turkish Cypriot community, crystalising a parallel Turkish Cypriot society with its own mode of life and administrative apparatus (Moudouros 2022: 98). The period after 1964 was further characterised by a shift in the politics of the Greek Cypriot community, embracing in practise the maintenance of an independent, majoritarian (Greek) Cypriot state (Ioannou 2020: 26). This embracement of the Cypriot polity was reflected in the conflicting positions, policies and interests expressed by the Republic of Cyprus and Greece (Attalides 1979: 68), as well as by the widespread attachment towards the Cypriot state developing amongst Greek Cypriot citizens (Panayiotou et al. 2022: 204).

This shift was further fuelled by political changes unfolding in Greece, which saw the establishment of a military dictatorship in 1967, increasing tensions between the Greek and Greek Cypriot governments (Hughes-Wilson 2011: 86). These tensions reached their peak in July of 1974, when a successful Greek-backed coup d'état was staged against Greek Cypriot president archbishop Makarios III, installing a puppet government in Cyprus (Hughes-Wilson 2011: 86). The coup triggered the invasion of the island by Turkish forces, leading to the occupation of 38% of the island's territory by the Turkish military, the internal displacement of hundreds of thousands of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots; and the de-facto ethnic segregation and geographical partition of the island, with the United Nations mediating an informal ceasefire and establishing a buffer zone between the opposing armies (Kliot & Mansfield 1997: 503-504).

Since 1977, inter-communal negotiations have been hosted by the United Nations with the aim of reunifying the island under a new federal bi-communal structure. Such an arrangement would see each community controlling its own federated state, under a central bi-communal government (Ker-Lindsay 2009: 16). In 1983 the area under the control of the Turkish forces declared itself an independent Turkish Cypriot state under the name 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus' (TRNC); but has received no formal recognition beyond the Republic of Turkey, leaving Turkish Cypriots in diplomatic and economic isolation (Ekici 2019: 50). The absence of recognition, combined with the consistent interventions of Turkey within the internal affairs of the non-recognised state, have in turn shaped the political landscape of the TRNC, with a Turkish Cypriot opposition developing antagonistically to Turkey, largely opposing the prospect of permanent partition, favouring the federal reunification of Cyprus instead (Moudouros 2022: 455).

In contrast, the Republic of Cyprus, which has remained under Greek Cypriot control since 1964, remains recognised as the sole sovereign state over the whole territory of the island; but is in fact able to execute effective control solely in the territory south of the island's buffer zone. Direct communication between the two sides became possible only since 2003, with the opening and permanent establishment of checkpoints accessible to the general public, enabling the crossing of civilians across the buffer zone (Ioannou 2020: 55-56). The closest the island has come towards reunification was in 2004, when a proposed peace plan, commonly known as the Annan Plan, was placed in parallel referendums, with the majority of Turkish Cypriots accepting the plan, in contrast to the majority of Greek Cypriots, who

rejected it. Despite new rounds of inter-communal negotiations from 2008 to 2017, a resolution to the Cyprus Dispute has remained elusive, with the island remaining divided.

1.3. A Note on the Employed Terminology

Terms employed to describe contemporary Cyprus have seldom remained neutral, situated as they are within the broader political language surrounding the Cyprus Dispute. The most typical example surrounds the textual representation of the TRNC, the non-recognised Turkish Cypriot state declared in 1983, which, as Yael Navaro-Yashin has noted, "is always placed in quotation marks in references outside northern Cyprus and Turkey to highlight its questionable legal status" (Navaro-Yashin 2012: 97). In Greek Cypriot discourse, the area claimed by the TRNC is described as the 'occupied territories', while the area under the effective control of the Republic of Cyprus is often described as the 'free territories', signifying clear demarcating lines over the legitimacy and illegitimacy surrounding the political claims of each side. Similarly, the Republic of Cyprus is described as the 'Greek Cypriot administration' in Turkish and Turkish Cypriot discourses, highlighting the refusal to recognise the legitimacy of the Republic following the de-facto suspension of its bi-communal constitution in 1963 (Navaro-Yashin 2012: 102). In opposition to dominant discourses, pro-reunification activists have in turn developed their own terminology, typically employing the terms 'north' and 'south' to describe the partition of the island (Pastellopoulos 2018: 42).

Conflictual terms however extend also to the descriptions surrounding the population of the island. Prior to 1974, the two communities were often described as 'Greeks/Turks of Cyprus' or as 'Cypriot Greeks/Turks', terms which emphasise ethnic identity over and above Cypriot particularity, while the terms 'Greek/Turkish Cypriot' have been employed consistently since 1974 to describe the members of each community (Pastellopoulos 2018: 4). Each set of descriptive terms entails its own ideological assumptions, which presuppose the embedment of an ethnic element for the description of each community, in turn complicating the representation of views which protest and oppose the validity of these ethnic identities. In past academic research I employed the terms 'Greek-speaking Cypriot' and 'Turkish-speaking Cypriot' (Pastellopoulos 2018: 5), in an attempt to provide a neutral terminology. Although these terms do act as alternatives, they are nonetheless not neutral, as they are themselves embedded within broader ideological discourses surrounding identity in Cyprus,

connected with Cypriotist political positions protesting the hegemony of Greek and Turkish national identities.

Recognising that the formulation of neutral descriptors remains an impossibility in a context where (national) identity is fiercely contested, I have chosen to use the commonly employed terms ‘Greek Cypriot’ and ‘Turkish Cypriot’ within this thesis when describing both the communities and my participants. As it will become evident in the following chapters, these terms are often objected to, and contested by my participants. It should thus be pointed out here that I am using these terms in a purely descriptive manner to signify how my participants are perceived by state mechanisms (recognised or not) currently existing on the island, rather than to describe the ways in which my participants perceive themselves. Similarly, the terms ‘Republic of Cyprus’ and ‘Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC)’ are employed throughout the thesis to describe the actual, existing administrative apparatuses present on the island, which remain a material reality, despite their complicated legal and political status.

2. Theorizing Nationalism

This chapter discusses the theoretical literature on nationalism, as well as the literature surrounding Greek/Turkish Cypriot nationalism and Cypriotism. It begins by exploring the concepts of 'imagined community', 'nation-form', 'banal nationalism' and 'everyday nationhood', moving on to examine and evaluate the Kohn dichotomy, a popular distinction between an 'ethnic' and a 'civic' form of nationalism that has often been utilised in nationalism studies. The chapter continues by discussing the concepts of 'liberal nationalism' and 'multicultural nationalism', subsequently shifting its attention to the literature surrounding Cyprus, outlining key contributions in the study of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism. The discussion moves on to provide a comprehensive summary of the literature surrounding Cypriotism, highlighting the ways in which the persistent use of the Kohn dichotomy has affected our theoretical understanding of the ideology. Drawing on theoretical insights located in the literature, the chapter concludes with an improved definition of Cypriotism.

2.1. Key Concepts in the Study of Nationalism

The study of nationalism has been inherently linked with the question of the origin of nations, a discussion dominated in the 20th century by the contrasting positions of primordialism and modernism. For primordialists, nations, while evolving and changing over time, had existed throughout human history and were therefore integral to the human experience itself, an inseparable part of what characterizes the essential core of humanity (Gellner 1999: 32). Modernist positions, on the other hand, perceived nations to be historically specific political entities that began to take form in the 18th century, as part of broader socio-economic transformations connected with the transition to modernity, such as the industrial revolution, the expansion of capitalism, the emergence of new forms of governance and administrative bureaucracy, as well as the development of the printed press and the expansion of literacy (Anderson 2006, Gellner 1983, Hobsbawm 2000). The dispute concluded with the triumph of the modernist position, which emerged as the dominant paradigm, providing the theoretical and empirical ground for subsequent research surrounding the emergence and early development of nations and nationalisms.

Less clarity has however characterized the discussions surrounding the question over what constitutes a nation. Definitions have repeatedly been proposed based on a selected number of criteria, such as those of common language, ethnicity, territory, history or culture. But as Eric Hobsbawm noted, the criteria included in such definitions have repeatedly failed to adequately incorporate all existing nations – exceptions could always be found, from communities that held national aspirations while not fitting within the defining criteria, to social entities that while fitting the criteria, did not (yet) understand themselves to be nations (2000: 6). This problem of definition has been pointed out as early as 1960 by Elias Canetti, who argued in his work *Crowds and Power* that the fundamental mistake in attempting to offer universal definitions was that the proposed definitions were formulated in relation to attempts at defining a general concept of nationality, resulting in a situation where "the exceptions have proved more important than the rule" (1973: 169), rendering definitions with limited explanatory power.

In contrast, Benedict Anderson's highly influential work *Imagined Communities* breaks with this approach, offering instead a definition that is historically contextual, connecting the emergence of national consciousness with the social, political and economic transformations characterizing the transition to modernity, while at the very same time remaining theoretically encompassing, capturing within it the differentiated expressions characterizing the multiplicity of national formations and identities.[2] By introducing the concept of the "imagined community" (2006: 7), Anderson aimed to describe the nation as a community characterized by an imagined, abstracted connectivity between its members, even though those very same members would never be able to meet most of their co-members in their lifetimes. As Anderson elaborated, a national community is imagined "because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion […]. In fact, all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined. Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined" (2006: 6).

[2] Given that the ideological content of nation-states, nationalist parties, movements and theoretical currents remains divergent and ever-changing, responding to global, as well as local contexts and conditions, the power of Anderson's definition continues to rest on its ability to transcend such differentiations.

Anderson argued that the development of modern states, including colonial administrative cantons, developed alongside the expansion of the vernacular printed press (what he refers to as 'print-capitalism'), giving rise to an increasingly literate population engaging with a printed text addressing them as vernacular readers within territorially fixed administrative areas – giving rise, slowly, to an imagined community connected both territorially and administratively. Yet for Anderson, it is the style of imagination that is central for distinguishing nations from alternative imagined communities, such as "the imagined community of Christendom" (Anderson 2006: 42). What makes the nation to stand out as a distinct political community is that it is always being imagined as "limited, because even the largest of them, encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations" (Anderson 2006: 7). The nation is thus always envisioned as a finite socio-political category, limited to a specific geographical area corresponding to either an existing, or a desired potential nation-state. One could add here that the nation is also a finite category in terms of membership. While changing cultural norms and political perceptions may extend the accepted membership of a particular nation, it is a presupposition that the nation itself is a restrictive category, expected to maintain both a practical, as well as a theoretical limit to its membership (Bechhofer & McCrone 2015: 161).

This intrinsically exclusionary dimension inherent in the concept of the nation has remained central to the theoretical discussions surrounding nationalism. Nonetheless, these discussions have followed a differentiated pattern over the use of the term 'nationalism', with the term often utilized to describe the specific politics of self-described nationalist movements and political parties, in contrast to theoretical positions employing the term to examine socio-political processes over and beyond the typical meaning associated with nationalism in everyday political discourse. The multiple meanings assigned to the term necessitate its clarification and separation from its rhetorically ascribed meaning, if we are to employ nationalism as a theoretical concept, rather than as a merely descriptive adjective.

For the purposes of our discussion, we can here identity two broad approaches to the study of nationalism. The first theorizes nationalism as an ideology prioritizing the nation as the central political unit. Anthony Smith's widely employed definition of nationalism as "an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity for a population which some of its members deem to constitute an actual or potential 'nation'" (2001: 9) follows this approach, as nationalism is here understood primarily as a movement, defined by an ideology and a set of fixed aims surrounding a perceived national community.

A similar perspective can be noted in Hans Kohn's characterization of nationalism as "first and foremost a state of mind, an act of consciousness" (1946: 10), in so far as what is emphasized is the subjective dimension of national identification. Particular Marxist readings have also followed a similar theoretical trajectory, viewing nationalism first and foremost as an ideology propagated by the ruling class in order to consolidate its control, by presenting its own class-specific interests as the interests of the nation, and thus of society as a whole (Glenn 1997: 81).

In contradistinction, an alternative theoretical framework perceives nationalism as a socio-political process intrinsically linked to the formation and reproduction of nation-states. In *Nations and Nationalism* Ernest Gellner defined nationalism within these parameters, arguing that it is "primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent" (1983: 1). A similar logic permeates also the work of Eric Hobsbawm, who emphasized this point early in his historical analysis of national formation, specifying that "nationalism comes before nations […] nations do not make states and nationalisms, but the other way around" (2000: 10). From this perspective, nationalism cannot be simply reduced to the level of a mere political ideology, of individual self-identification or of a self-described political position, in so far as the reproduction of the nation, its fundamental political unit, remains inherently dependent upon and linked with the reproduction of the state itself.

This difference in approach can be located within the historical trajectory of nationalism itself. As a political phenomenon emerging in the 18th and 19th centuries, nationalism spread throughout the European and colonial world, aiming for the establishment of nation-states founded on the principle of national self-determination, typically opposing both foreign rule and traditional structures of authority.[3] But as the fundamental objective of nationalism, the congruency of the national with the political unit, began to materialize in the formation of nation-states, the state itself is transformed, becoming the central institution utilized in the process of national homogenization. From population exchange, forced assimilation and ethnic cleansing, to the constitution of a national language, the formation of a national school curriculum and the formalization of grand narratives unified in the standardization of national

[3] It is indicative of the influence of nationalism that in contexts where traditional modes of authority have continued to operate, as is the case of monarchies, the ideology of the state has been infused with nationalist rhetoric, presenting the head of state as the personification of the nation-building project itself (Anderson 1991: 4, Frisch 2002: 100, Fong 2009: 692).

historiographies, cultural representations and traditions (Hall 2003: 16-17, Hobsbawm 1983: 263), national homogenization becomes engrained in the function of the state, morphing the political form of modern society into what Étienne Balibar has described as the "nation form" (1990: 329). Nationalism therefore no longer remains a mere ideological movement contesting political power, but becomes hegemonic,[4] engraining itself onto the structure and ideological content of the state, which in turn becomes the central institution for the sculpting and reproduction of the nation. Grasped as a theoretical concept, nationalism is characterized by this duality, it is at the same time "the ideology that creates and maintains nation-states" (Billig 1995: 19).

The classic sociological definition of the state originates in the work of Max Weber, who defined the state as any "human community that (successfully) lays claim to the monopoly of legitimate physical violence within a particular territory" (2004a: 33), further outlining that political legitimacy has been historically drawn from tradition, charismatic leadership or political representation (2004b: 133). Nonetheless, as Balibar noted, the nation-state draws its political legitimacy not merely through the aforementioned modes of legitimization, but by further inscribing the category of the 'people' upon the reality of social relations, by constituting "a community which recognizes itself in advance in the institution of the state, which recognizes that state as 'its own' in opposition to other states, and, in particular, inscribes its political struggles within the horizon of that state" (1990: 346). The formation and reproduction of the nation-form presupposes the continuous reproduction of the individual as "homo nationalis" (Balibar 1990: 345), as a national subject integrated in the category of a 'people' represented by the nation-state. Nationalism is characterized by this tautology, reaffirming the transhistorical existence of the nation, at the very same moment as it is enabling its perpetual reproduction as a historically specific category. As Theodor Adorno clarified in his lecture *The Principle of Nationality*, this is the "primal pseudos, the central delusion" (2006: 106) inherent in the concept of the nation, the active misrepresentation of the nation as a natural category located outside the processes of history. But as Adorno pointed out, this delusion is inherent in the concept of the nation itself – for the concept to come into being and acquire meaning in social relations, it needs to act as if it

[4] The Soviet Union has often been cited as the example par excellence of a modern state that was not characterized by the centrality commonly ascribed to nations in past and existing nation-states. For a thorough examination disputing this position, see Slezkine (1994).

was a natural category and therefore must mystify, misconstrue and misinterpret its own origin (Azzouz 2021: 8).

The individual living within a nation-state is thus constituted as a national citizen, as a legal and political subject either belonging within the national community or excluded from it.[5] Her inclusion or exclusion in turn determines her position within social relations, in so far as it conditions her access to a series of benefits and rights, including access to welfare, the labour market, electoral rights, public healthcare and freedom of movement. While remaining undoubtedly imagined, nations have therefore a substantially material dimension, in the same way that the categories of gender and race, which have similarly been rigorously deconstructed, nonetheless continue to influence, define, restrict and condition the material reality of the individuals upon which they inscribe themselves. It is from this perspective that Balibar, commenting critically on Anderson's contributions, argued that "[e]very social community reproduced by the functioning of institutions is imaginary, that is, it is based on the projection of individual existence into the weft of a collective narrative, on the recognition of a common name and on traditions lived as the trace of an immemorial past […] But this comes down to accepting that, in certain conditions, only imaginary communities are real" (1990: 346).

The particular ways though which national identification reproduces within nation-states has been increasingly gaining attention in the literature. This shift of focus from the historical emergence of nations to their contemporary reproduction has often drawn its insights from the contributions of Michael Billig, whose work *Banal Nationalism* attempted to analyse this process (Calhoun 2017: 18). Billig criticized what he saw as a fundamental lack in the analyses permeating nationalism, the failure to "describe what happens to nationalism once the nation-state is established […], as if nationalism suddenly disappears" (1995: 44), resulting in a representation of a society characterized by an "[o]rdinary life in the normal state…assumed to be banal, unexciting politically and non-nationalist", while nationalism is in contrast associated with non-Western societies and presented as intrinsically "extraordinary, politically charged and emotionally driven" (Billig 1995: 44).

[5] It should be noted that the demarcating lines of inclusion and exclusion are neither exclusively determined by citizenship, nor are they ever permanently fixed, remaining the site of social and political contestation (Kymlicka 2003: 146).

For Billig, nationalism becomes an integral, banal aspect of everyday life following the establishment and embedment of the nation-state, reproduced continuously through discursive and symbolic processes that remain largely unnoticed. Billig names this dimension of nationalism 'banal nationalism', contrasting it with 'hot nationalism' (Billig 1995: 44), the vocal, conscious and aggressive version of nationalism which has been typically associated with the term.[6] In Billig's schema, what has been commonly described as nationalism is but a more extreme, conscious political expression and intensification of a nonetheless ever-present social phenomenon:

> The thesis of banal nationalism suggests that nationhood is near the surface of contemporary life. If this is correct, then routinely familiar habits of language will be continually acting as reminders of nationhood. […] Banal nationalism operates with prosaic, routine words, which take nations for granted, and which, in so doing inhabit them (Billig 1995: 93).

Banal nationalism becomes identifiable within processes reproducing the nation as a naturalized category, a category through which contemporary social, political and economic life is understood. In other words, banal nationalism reproduces a comprehension of the world through the passive acceptance of the existence and interrelation of nations, shaping individuals as national subjects within naturalized nation-states (Billig 1995: 37). This is achieved, for Billig, through a systematic routine of linguistic and symbolic deixis he calls flagging. Ranging from media discourse and sporting events to publicly visible national symbols and typical political speeches, flagging acts as a constant reminder to individuals of their nationhood and their sense of belonging within a national 'we' (Billig 1995: 106). These reminders, being so numerous and embedded in the broader social surroundings, operate mindlessly rather than mindfully, reproducing the language, symbolism and discourse of the nation in a banal, almost unnoticeable fashion (Billig 1995: 38). Driving this point across, Billig described the national flag hanging on a public building, forgotten and unnoticed, as the perfect image of banal nationalism, a national symbol that has become a naturalized part of the aesthetic and architectural background of everyday life.

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[6] Following Billig, we can argue that the (re-)emergence of self-described nationalist movements, or the mass mobilization of populations over 'national' goals and struggles, do not signify a return of nationalism to a political sphere that had been laying beyond it, but rather the intensification of 'hot' nationalism towards a specified goal; or the contestation over the role, character and content of the existing nation-state, signifying a disintegration, or a challenge to an existing national consensus.

The theoretical contributions of *Banal Nationalism* have been critically incorporated within the literature surrounding the concept of 'everyday nationhood' (Antonsich 2016: 33, Skey 2009: 332, Fox & Miller-Idriss 2008: 537). While maintaining Billig's insights surrounding nationalism's persistence, the thesis of banal nationalism has received criticism from within this literature on multiple grounds. On a first level, Billig's analysis has been criticized for focusing exclusively on institutions, presenting banal nationalism as a process resulting in the crystallization of a unified national subject maintaining a standardized, homogenized understanding of the nation, without examining how national identity is comprehended by the individuals to which it is so routinely flagged (Antonsich 2016: 32-33). The concept of 'everyday nationhood' is therefore employed in order to address these limitations, by exploring nationalism's dissemination, (re)signification and reproduction from a bottom-up approach, emphasizing the experiences located in everyday life (Antonsich 2016: 32-33). As Jon Fox and Demelza Jones pointed out, the 'everyday' is here neither presented as an analytical category, nor as the object of investigation itself, but is understood as a social site within which nationhood is reproduced through the interactions and behaviour of the people acting within it (Fox & Jones 2013: 595).[7] While not independent of broader social relations and political institutions, the 'everyday' maintains, as a social field, a degree of autonomy within which national identification is interpreted and comprehended (Fox & Jones 2013: 595). Jon Fox and Cynthia Miller-Idriss have suggested four distinct ways through which this reproduction takes place in the everyday: by talking the nation; emphasizing how people "make discursive claims for, about and in the name of the nation" (2008: 538); by choosing the nation; focusing on the decisions people take when encountered with 'national' options; by performing the nation; characterized by particular ritual performances and their attached symbolic signification; and by consuming the nation; exploring how specific objects and commodities; from museums to food; media and literature; act as markers of national reminding for their consumers (Fox & Miller-Idriss 2008: 542-551).

Ivana Spasić has critiqued the thesis of banal nationalism on a more fundamental level, questioning its universal applicability. In her examination of nationalism in post-Yugoslav Serbia she highlighted how Serbian national identity remains an emotional topic; driven by heated debate over the history, topography, symbols and membership of the nation (2017:

[7] As Andrew Smith noted in his observations surrounding sociological research on the study of ethnicity and everyday life, the absence of adequate theorization surrounding the concept of the 'everyday' remains a key limitation (2015: 1137), an insight which can also be extended here to the literature surrounding 'everyday nationhood'.

41). While agreeing that elements of banal nationalism are also identifiable in Serbia, nationalism has not retreated to the background of everyday life and the transition towards a stable status of mindless banality characterizing Billig's original thesis, has not taken place (Spasić 2017: 42).[8] Spasić suggested that the problem lies with the strong emphasis that has been placed on the distinction between banal and hot nationalism itself. Billig originally employed the distinction in order to describe the reproduction of nationalism in Western nation-states, as a means of further critiquing the bias he located in academic research, which presented Western societies as having transcended nationalist sentiment. But the applicability of the banal nationalism thesis, that banality eventually becomes the dominant form of nationalism within society, appears for Spasić to remain restricted to a limited number of Western societies, since, on the one hand, the concept was developed primarily to describe those societies, and on the other, there is no consistent indication that the hot nationalism of non-Western societies is cooling down. Spasić therefore concluded that the concept of everyday nationhood appears to have more explanatory potential as a universal concept, since it does not "force us to choose between 'hot' and 'cold' forms of nationalism [as] it takes in both poles and all the points in between" (Spasić 2017: 42).

2.2. The Kohn Dichotomy

The differentiation between an 'ethnic/cultural' and a 'civic/political' version of nationalism has been commonly employed in the literature surrounding nationalism studies, in order to describe two distinct ideological expressions of nationalism (Blackburn 2021: 1). Although not employing these specific terms, the popularisation of the distinction has been attributed to Hans Kohn and has commonly been referred to as the Kohn dichotomy (Coakley 2018: 253).[9] Within this conceptual binary, ethnic nationalism is argued to be characterised by an emphasis on the myth of common ancestry and kinship, defining national membership through cultural, ethnic, phenotypical and/or linguistic characteristics; upon which claims for national self-determination are founded (Brown 1999: 282). In contrast, civic nationalism is theorised as a political community formed through the co-habitation of a common

[8] As Michael Skey further observed, there is no examination in *Banal Nationalism* of how nationalism transitions from its hot to its banal variation, or vice versa (2009: 340).

[9] While popularized by Kohn, such distinctions were not particular to his work, but were characteristic of 19th century European thought. For a brief, but informative examination of similar distinctions in European political and social theory, see Coakley (2018).

administered territory, which generates a national character and civic culture though the involvement of the population in civic society and the management of state institutions. In turn, this gives rise to the formation of a general understanding of a common destiny, despite ethnic or cultural heterogeneity among the population, creating a unified loyalty between citizens towards their particular territorial homeland (Brown 1999: 283). The application of the dichotomy has been further characterised by a geographical split, identifying civic nationalism with Western Europe and the United States, and ethnic nationalism with Central and Eastern Europe, as well as much of the rest of the world (Jaskułowski 2010: 294).

The dichotomy has been however criticised for its limitations in clarification and precision (Kennedy & Ginderachter 2021: 3). As Krzysztof Jaskułowski has highlighted (2010: 296), characteristics ascribed to non-Western, ethnic nations have been historically present and continue to appear in Western, civic nations, and vice versa. Will Kymlicka (1995: 132) further pointed out that the category of the civic nation excludes cultural considerations a priori, despite evidence that nationalisms often described as civic maintain a cultural component. The utilisation of the distinction thus appears to act as a barrier, rather than as a tool for theoretical scrutinisation in further examining how culture varies and is interpreted within different expressions of nationalism.

The entailment of normative statements, attributing progressive values, such as liberal democracy, inclusivity and tolerance, to civic nationalism, while associating ethnic nationalism with illiberalism and authoritarian tendencies, has also been emphasised (Blackburn 2021: 1, Jaskułowski 2010: 290). Bernard Yack drew attention to the parallelism of the dichotomy with a series of questionable stereotypical binaries, including "Western/Eastern, rational/emotive, voluntary/inherited, good/bad, ours/theirs" (1996: 196), with the dichotomy commonly presenting Western national identities as rationally constituted and therefore, largely independent of the national myths and excesses that are attributed to ethnic nations. Taking his critique a step further, Yack argued that the dichotomy is itself founded upon its own "myth of the civic nation" (1996: 196), the conceptualisation of a historically pure civic version of nationhood that has, however, never existed. Similarly, Yael Tamir stressed that the dichotomy "meant to establish the moral supremacy of the West" (2019: 425), encouraging "the view that in civic nations the roles of culture, language, religion, ethnicity, and race are minimal and can therefore be ignored" (Tamir 2019: 431). Indeed, this bias is characteristic of Kohn's own work, as he explained instances of ethnic nationalism in civic nations as the effect of external factors, while maintaining that the same

phenomena in non-Western nationalism were internal to those societies themselves – a pattern of theorisation which Jaskułowski identified as an attribution error located at the heart of the original formulation of the Kohn dichotomy (Jaskułowski 2010: 297).

That the use of the civic-ethnic binary continues to persist in the literature appears to betray its reification in the study of nationalism, blurring, rather than clarifying the ideological content of the phenomenon it aims to investigate (Kennedy & Ginderachter 2021: 7). Nonetheless, the problem of deriving distinct, yet universal types of nationalism is not merely due to a failing of theorisation, but indicative of a broader difficulty connected to the phenomenon that such theorisation aims to investigate. Ideologically, nationalism distinguishes itself in its focus on defining difference, as every nation is conceptualised as a unique entity, vis-à-vis all other nations. Thus, nationalism is characterised by a contradiction in relation to universality and particularity, in so far as the phenomenon appears and presents itself as a universal, yet the ideological content remains necessarily contextual and specific, with no two nationalisms ever being the same, as nationalism aims to ascribe a unique content to the particular nation which it invokes (Finlayson 1998: 100). In this sense we can observe, alongside John Hall, that "nationalism has […] existences rather than any single essence" (Hall 2003: 16), remaining necessarily contextual, particular and specific in its expressions and manifestations.

2.3. Liberal Nationalism and Multicultural Nationalism

The conceptual organisation of nationalism into distinct 'types' has not however been limited to the Kohn Dichotomy, nor is it exhausted by the formulation of conceptual binaries. Alternative concepts that have been proposed include 'liberal nationalism' and 'multicultural nationalism', both of which place emphasis on the importance of culture in national belonging (Dikici 2022: 166). The theorisation of the concepts could be perceived as a response to the ethnic, cultural and religious pluralism increasingly characterising a globalised world, within which the nation-state has nonetheless remained the dominant political institution. While both liberal and multicultural nationalism embrace liberal democracy, share a commitment towards cultural tolerance, and often support a reshaping of national culture with the aim of extending national belonging beyond majority groups, they are distinguished by a number of key differences (Dikici 2022: 159).

Liberal nationalism remains associated with a formulation of liberal political theory aiming to reconcile liberal political values, such as individual rights, autonomy, and freedom, with nationalist notions of collective belonging, solidarity and loyalty (Dikici 2022: 149-150). From a liberal nationalist perspective, the presence of a national culture is not antithetical, but fundamental for the materialisation of individual freedom, as national cultures provide a cultural context within which a plethora of social actions could be realised, while in parallel attaching meaning to those actions (Dikici 2022: 151). Liberal nationalism tends to stress diversity; promoting the inclusiveness of minority groups on the presupposition that their members will integrate within the dominant national culture (Dikici 2022: 152). As Erdem Dikici pointed out, liberal nationalists have however been split over the extent to which cultural difference should also be accepted within the public sphere (Dikici 2022: 152).

For David Miller, distinct cultures should be reserved for the private sphere (Miller 2008: 375), while for Yael Tamir, tolerance should further include the recognition of a "right to culture" (1993: 8), affording members of minorities the freedom to publicly commemorate their past, celebrate their culture, use their language and "live a fulfilling national life" (1993: 8). Another point of contestation surrounds the extent to which an existing national culture should adapt, in order to foster a broader sense of national belonging, able to encapsulate both majority and minority groups. One response to this dilemma, associated with Will Kymlicka, has been the promotion of a thinner conception of national culture, nation-building and national identity, which nonetheless, faces its own limitations in the possibility of national culture becoming too thin, to the point of no longer fostering a sufficient level of collective belonging (Dikici 2022: 151).

The concept of multicultural nationalism has been more firmly associated with Tariq Modood (Mandaville 2021: 214), who has argued that multiculturalism is a "mode of integration that does not just emphasize the centrality of minority group identities, but rather proves incomplete without the remaking of national identity so that all citizens have a sense of belonging" (Modood 2019: 233). For Modood, multicultural nationalism rests precisely on this remaking, on the reimagining of national culture and national narration in a manner enabling the recognition, respect and integration of minorities within a reshaped dominant national culture (Dikici 2022: 156). Such a reshaping does not merely entail the accommodation of minority groups, but the further integration of their corresponding cultural, religious, or traditional characteristics within the symbols and structures of the nation-state, providing a pluralistic thickening of national identity (Modood 2019: 240). From

this perspective, multiculturalism and nationalism are not antithetical, as multiculturalism is not aiming to displace nationalism, but is instead embarking upon "a reconstruction of the symbolic terms of social unity" (Chin 2020: 113) characterising national belonging. Thus, while liberal nationalism entails the incorporation of cultural tolerance and a potential thinning of national culture for the accommodation of minorities, multicultural nationalism envisions a thickening of national culture through the symbolic and structural integration of minority cultures within the institutions of the nation-state.

Both concepts entail a certain descriptive capacity, since they can be utilised to interpret existing social and political phenomena. Nonetheless, liberal nationalism and multicultural nationalism also entail a series of normative judgments, as they propose a particular mode of collective belonging as desirable and preferable over others. This normative dimension, which remains indistinguishable from the articulation of the concepts themselves, reflects the ideological content embedded within them. To the extent that the concepts have been formulated as a critique of majoritarian and illiberal forms of nationalism, they have not merely been developed to describe social relations, but to potentially shape them in their own image. Thus, the concepts of 'liberal nationalism' and 'multicultural nationalism' should not be perceived as isolated analytical categories, divorced from the broader ideologies that have produced them, but instead should be recognised as distinct nationalist visions over the form, content and future of the concept of the nation, as well as of the nation-state.[10]

2.4. Perspectives on Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot Nationalism

Given the influence of nationalism in the various phases of the Cyprus Dispute, it is not surprising that national identities and nationalism have remained central to the study of Cyprus, particularly among academics who maintain a critical position towards nationalist politics and their role in the unfolding of the conflict (Trimikliniotis 2019: 164). Pascalis Kitromilides (1979) was one of the first to explore the ideological content of nationalism in Cyprus, focusing on Greek Cypriot nationalism, which he linked to the ideas of Greek irridentism that came to prominence after the Greek Revolution of 1821. In his historical analysis, Kitromilides argued that Greek Cypriot nationalism developed a double political

[10] This point is also applicable to theorisations critical of nationalism, as such theorisations presuppose, explicitly or implicitly, the possibility and desirability of constituting and organising modern social relations beyond the category of the 'nation'.

function during the British colonial period. On the one hand, it expressed the popular support for national self-determination, by mobilising the Greek Cypriot population against British colonialism through the demand of enosis. On the other, it was utilised as an ideological orthodoxy by the Church and the Greek Cypriot bourgeoise against the emerging Cypriot left and the liberal sections of the political right, as a strategy of barring political opponents from challenging the legitimacy of the Greek Cypriot political and economic elite (Kitromilides 1979: 24). For Kitromilides, this function of Greek Cypriot nationalism engrained intolerance and illiberalism as a lasting characteristic of Cypriot public political life, continuing to survive and safeguard the interests of the elite well after the island's decolonisation (Kitromilides 1979: 24).

As Kitromilides further noted, Greek Cypriot nationalism came in confrontation with Turkish Cypriot nationalism, as the latter encompassed elements of pan-Turkism combined with a hyphenated anti-Greek rhetoric (Kitromilides 1979: 27). In his own work, Niyazi Kızılyürek (2015: 179) observed that Turkish Cypriot nationalism developed through antagonism with its Greek counterpart, consolidating its ideological positions through its opposition to enosis, the implementation of the Kemalist reforms, which gave rise to a modernist, secular national identity, and the identification with Turkey as the national centre of the Turkish Cypriots. The combination of ideological illiberalism and Greek and Turkish nationalist contestation formulated what Kitromilides described as "the dialectic of intolerance" (1979: 27); the reproduction of an adversarial, uncompromising mode of politics that has remained intrenched in the political life of post-independence Cyprus.

The relationship between the two nationalisms has been further explored in the comparative study of Yiannis Papadakis (1998a) on the ideological content of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalist narration. Papadakis argued that the two nationalisms follow the same structural logic, presenting a sharp distinction between victim and aggressor in their narrations (Papadakis 1998a: 69). In his analysis, he highlighted the centrality placed by each nationalist narrative over the 'questionable' motives of the other community, producing conflicting mediated meanings over history, reenforcing the ideological paradigms of victimhood found on each side of the dispute, with Greek Cypriot narrations explaining historical events through Turkish expansionism and Turkish Cypriot ones through the unbending support of Greek Cypriots for enosis (Papadakis 1998a: 80). As he further noted in his ethnographic work on collective memory (Papadakis 2005), Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalist narratives emphasise different and often antithetical historical events

while paying little attention to others, making the narratives, as well as the collective memories forming around them, difficult to reconcile.

In her own comparative work, Rebecca Bryant (2002) however challenged the tendency to view Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism as mere reflections of each other. Examining how they are founded on different discourses over the nation and its relation to territory, Bryant demonstrates that the two nationalisms produce distinct processes of naturalisation that are specific to each community. For Bryant, Greek Cypriot narratives naturalise the nation through a genealogical discourse which traces 'links that are already assumed' (2002: 522), tautologically reaffirming the inherent Greekness of Cyprus. Thus, Greek Cypriot nationalism legitimises its claims by demonstrating this inherent Greekness from antiquity to the contemporary period, presenting this historical trajectory as a pure, undisturbed linearity. In contrast, Turkish Cypriot nationalism follows what Bryant has called an archaeological discourse, emphasising the utilisation of factuality and immediate experience, legitimising its positions upon an assemblage of historical facts, rather than through the employment of self-fulfilling, teleological assumptions (Bryant 2002: 524). As Bryant further highlighted (2004: 216), this indicates that Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalisms embrace different ontological starting points, morphing separate modes of interpreting the world, a process which drives Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots further apart.

Nationalism is however not an unchanging phenomenon, and some emphasis has also been placed in documenting the ideological shifts taking place after the island's de-facto partition. In his examinations of Greek nationalism in Cyprus, sociologist Caesar Mavratsas (1997, 1998) observed that following partition, Greek Cypriot nationalism has largely shifted from supporting enosis to favouring the island's independence. Mavratsas traced this shift to the direct involvement of Greece in the events of 1974, since the Greek coup gave the pretext for the Turkish invasion, as well as the ensuing stigmatisation of right-wing Greek Cypriot nationalism, as far-right Greek Cypriot nationalists actively participated in the Greek-backed coup. In the aftermath of the Turkish invasion, enosis was both discredited and stigmatised, losing popular support, as it no longer signified national liberation, becoming associated instead with treachery and ideological fanaticism (Mavratsas 1998: 101). With support for Cypriot independence emerging as the new political consensus, Greek Cypriot nationalism adapted its position in favour of maintaining an independent Cypriot polity, combining it with an ideological commitment for the reaffirmation of the island's Greekness, a commitment

reflected in official historical narration, cultural and educational policy, ceremonial symbolism and the active seeking of closer diplomatic and cultural ties with the mainland Greek state (Mavratsas 1997: 728).

A similar shift has also been observed taking place within Turkish Cypriot nationalism in the post-1974 period, as support for the cultural autonomy and political independence of Turkish Cypriots has been gradually gaining ground (Loizides 2007: 181-182). This shift appears to be related to the effects of the island's de-facto partition on the Turkish Cypriot community, which have led to discontent both with Turkey, as well as with the motherland version of Turkish Cypriot nationalism that has dominated political life in the first decades following partition. While taksim was technically achieved in 1974, the community has remained in continuous international isolation, as the territory of the self-declared Turkish Cypriot state has not received recognition, being considered instead internationally as an illegal state (Navaro-Yashin 2012: 6). Wide dissatisfaction has further emerged with Turkey's interference in Turkish Cypriot politics, the extensive influence of the Turkish army in everyday life and the ongoing settlement of a mainland Turkish population that is perceived as both alien and culturally different to the Turkish Cypriot community (Kızılyürek & Gautier-Kızılyürek 2004: 51).

2.5. The Literature Surrounding Cypriotism

Cypriotism is commonly presented in relation to Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism, as that ideological current which actively opposes both nationalisms and the ongoing partition of the island, aspiring for a common Cypriot identity that transcends historical and existing ethnic divisions (Khan 2002: 44). Other terms that have been used in the literature to describe political or social phenomena expressing similar, or identical positions, include 'Cypriot consciousness' (Attalides 1979: 59), 'Cyprocentrism' (Peristianis 2008: 224) and 'Cypriot identity' (Panayiotou 1992: 15), all of which are presented in a conflictual relation to the dominant Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalisms.[11] It is worth noting that the term has also been employed to describe a particular sociological

[11] Since some of these terms appear to originate from public political discourse in the Republic of Cyprus, a discourse that has been historically dominated by Greek Cypriot nationalism, terms like 'Cypriot consciousness' and 'Cypriotism' were initially or subsequently assigned negative connotations.

reading of Cypriot modernity, rather than merely a political ideology. In his unpublished work on Cypriot identity, Andreas Panayiotou (1996) defined Cypriotism as the 'historical experience of Cypriot modernity as a systemic phenomenon' (1996: 15), connecting it to the crystallisation and evolution of a Cypriot identity that has been morphed through the survival and adaptation of 'residuals', of cultural, social, historical and political remnants that have neither been subsumed; nor eradicated through Greek and Turkish national homogenisation (Panayiotou 1996: 2). Ranging from Cypriot folk culture and linguistic difference to the historical experience of inter-communal co-existence and specific elements of modernism inherited from British colonialism, these residuals act for Panayiotou as the foundations for the subsequent development of a specifically Cypriot consciousness in the 20th century (Panayiotou 1996: 2).

Nonetheless, the term has been utilised more consistently to describe a particular ideological position. A widely employed definition originates in Mavratsas, who defined Cypriotism as "the idea that Cyprus has its own *sui generis* character and, thus, must be viewed as an entity which is independent from both the motherlands of the two main communities of the island, that is, Greece and Turkey" (1997: 721). The definition itself hints towards the ideological content of Cypriotism, in so far as Cyprus is considered as an independent, autonomous entity contained within its own territorial space, in contrast to the various expressions of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism, which consider the island as a national, historical, ethnic, or cultural extension of a larger political entity, a 'motherland' nation-state. Additionally, the definition is further characterised by an emphasis on difference, since Cyprus is argued to maintain a sui generis character, entailing a set of characteristics that make it stand out from both Greece and Turkey, in a yet unspecified way.

As Nicos Trimikliniotis has noted, Cypriotist positions have often been met with ridicule and censorship (2019: 161), particularly by individuals and institutions that are in agreement, either partially or fully, with Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot national narratives. As ideological disputes over identity have the tendency to become heated and intense in Cyprus, this atmosphere has occasionally been reflected in academia. Thus, in some cases Cypriotism has been simply met with dismissal. For example, Turkish Cypriot psychoanalyst Vamik Volkan (2008) has described Cypriotist positions held by Turkish Cypriots as large-scale identity confusion (2008: 107), while Greek Cypriot academic Demetra Demetriou (2020) has described left-wing Greek Cypriot expressions of Cypriotism as "a-historical, isolationist, […] nativist, and most often permeated with hatred towards anything Hellenic" (2020: 3). In

both cases, Cypriotism is claimed to originate in foreign interventions intending to undermine and replace existing national identities with a new, Cypriot nation. Volkan has connected Cypriotism to western diplomats attempting to facilitate the reunification of the island (2008: 102), while Demetriou argued that Cypriotism is a colonial construction (2020: 2), originating in the minds of British colonialists.[12] By approaching Cypriotism as atypical, external, and artificial, a process of delegitimization appears to be at play in the work of both Volkan and Demetriou. As the local Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot national identities are not scrutinised in a similar, critical fashion, they are reinforced as autochthonous, inherent, and historically rooted, gaining an aura of normalcy and objectivity that is simultaneously denied to Cypriotist senses of identity.

Academics sympathetic to Cypriotism have however provided more attentive readings, with most detailed research focusing on Cypriotism in the Greek Cypriot community. In his 1998 work *Facets of Greek Nationalism in Cyprus*, Mavratsas presented Cypriotism as a de-ethnicised political ideology which emphasises the independence and autonomy of Cyprus from Greece and Turkey, stressing the inclusion to an independent Cypriot polity over and above identification with the Greek or Turkish nation (1998: 86). Mavratsas further argued that the dispute between these two positions is reflected in the consciousness of Greek Cypriots, to the extent that Greek Cypriot nationalism dominates political and theoretical consciousness, while Cypriotism appears to be permeating in pre-theoretical consciousness, as everyday Cypriot life is characteristically differentiated and autonomous from mainland Greece (1999: 100). Mavratsas here paid attention to linguistic differences located in the widespread use of the Cypriot Greek language variety, the fundamentally different social and political institutions found on the island, the engagement with Cypriot, rather than Greek mass media and sports, as well as the Cypriot educational system, which create, according to him, a ‘specifically Cypriot lifeworld’ (1999: 98).

[12] Demetriou has further stated that the idea of constructing a Cypriot nation has been promoted by the New Cyprus Association, an organization that was formed in the Republic of Cyprus in the 1970s. There appears to be however little evidence to support this claim, as the Association has never publicly promoted the creation of a Cypriot nation or denied the existence of Greek and Turkish national identities on the island, supporting multiculturalism and political liberalism instead. For a discussion on the ideology of the association, see Mavratsas (1997: 724). The refusal to consciously promote a Cypriot nation as an alternative to Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism has also been identified as an ideological element characterizing the extra-parliamentary Greek Cypriot left. For more information, see Pastellopoulos (2018).

A similar reading appears in the work of Nicos Peristianis, who employed the terms Cyprocentrism and Hellenocentrism to describe Cypriotism and Greek Cypriot nationalism, noting that Cyprocentrism in Greek Cypriot society stresses rapprochement with Turkish Cypriots, in contrast to Hellenocentric perspectives, which emphasise closeness to Greece (2008: 2). In his research on perceptions of national identity among Greek Cypriots, Peristianis further highlighted what he described as the dual loyalty imbedded in Greek Cypriot society. On the one hand, there is the loyalty towards the state, which is perceived as the key institution through which the island can be eventually reunified; and on the other hand, there is the loyalty towards the ethnic/national group, which demarcates the historical, cultural and linguistic points of difference with the Turkish Cypriot community (Peristianis 2008: 253). For Peristianis, this dual loyalty gives rise to a series of political positions, ranging from a balancing between the two loyalties, to the adoption of extreme positions identifying completely either with the state, or with the nation.[13]

In his own theoretical vocabulary Panayiotou has employed the term 'Cypriot identity' to describe Cypriotism, arguing that it is characterised by the identification with the territory of Cyprus, by support towards the island's political independence and by the recognition of Cyprus as a historically heterogeneous cultural space, in contrast to Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalist positions, which perceive the island as having a monolithic cultural history (1992: 13-14). Expanding on the latter point, Panayiotou argued that this recognition gives rise to a "synthetic identity of the Cypriot that understands itself as the bridge between Turkism and Hellenism, which constitute extreme poles" (1992: 13-14). Although recognizing the possibility that Cypriotism could evolve into a national identity, Panayiotou has argued for a Cypriot identity acting as a bridge over existing national identities, embracing tolerance towards heterogeneity and safeguarding in this way the island's independence (1992: 15).

While there have not been any open disputes surrounding the origins of Cypriotism as an identifiable ideological current, there does not appear to be a clear consensus in the literature.

[13] It is worth noting that Leonard Doob (1986) identified a similar split existing within both communities, which he described as 'double patriotism', the parallel identification of an individual with her nation, as well as with the island of Cyprus in particular. Doob noted several differences which Cypriots perceived to distinguish them from mainland Greeks and Turks, including differences in language, traditions, a higher level of education, a long history of peaceful inter-communal co-existence and the inheritance of institutions and customs originating in British colonialism (1986: 391-392).

For Michael Attalides, its first expressions can be traced to the 1960s, connected with the independence of the island, a development which crystallised a different set of political and economic interests for the Republic of Cyprus than those of Greece and Turkey (1979: 58-59). While not specifically disputing this position, both Mavratsas and Peristianis have emphasised the decade following 1974 as the 'golden age of Cypriotism' (Mavratsas 1997: 96), at least within the Greek Cypriot community, arguing that the momentary stigmatisation of Greek Cypriot nationalism enabled the ascent of Cypriotism in the public political sphere (Peristianis 2008: 224). Academics writing on the Turkish Cypriot community have tended to focus instead almost exclusively on the post-1974 period, identifying Cypriotism as a 'project' of the Turkish Cypriot left (Ramm 2006: 529, Kızılyürek 2012: 173). Its expanded influence has been typically attributed to the generalised discontent over the ongoing political isolation of Turkish Cypriots; and the demographic change that has been developing in northern Cyprus following 1974 (Kızılyürek &Gautier-Kızılyürek 2004: 51). Lastly, Panayiotou traced Cypriotism to the 1920s, focusing on the early positions held by the Communist Party of Cyprus, which included an initial opposition to enosis, support for the island's independence and the ideological commitment towards inter-communal collaboration (Panayiotou 1996: 43), paving, for Panayiotou, an alternative road to modernity than the one imposed on Cyprus by colonialism (Panayiotou 2006: 274).

The literature focusing on Cypriotism in the Turkish Cypriot community appears to be more limited, tending to explore the more exclusionary implications of the ideology. Christoph Ramm noted that conceptions of Cypriotness among Turkish Cypriots have been intrinsically connected with claiming a European identity (2006: 539), an ideological dimension which Mete Hatay (2008: 147) has identified with processes of orientalism. In her own research, Meltem Hamit (2008: 50) has further maintained that these conceptions of Cypriotness are intrinsically linked with negative perceptions towards the mainland Turkish population that has settled on the island after 1974, rather than merely in opposition to the influence of the Turkish state and to Turkish Cypriot nationalism. This dimension has been further recognised by Enver Gülseven (2020: 35) and Mertkan Hamit (2009: 150), both of which have highlighted how Turkish Cypriot versions of Cypriotism are morphed through the exclusion of Turkish mainlanders, perceived as the internal other of Turkish Cypriots (Gülseven 2020: 35). In contrast, variants of Cypriotism in the Greek Cypriot community appear to avoid clearly defining a demarcating line of exclusion, tending to stress tolerance and heterogeneity (Trimikliniotis 1999, Pastellopoulos 2018: 79, Rakopoulos 2022: 8-9). This observation does

not imply that one version of Cypriotism is necessarily more tolerant than the other, but rather aims to draw attention to the extent to which each version is consciously, rather than unconsciously, stressing cultural difference in relation to the various ethnic groups living on the island.

Such differences should not be surprising, given that each community has been developing independently of each other for more than 50 years, under vastly different economic, political and social conditions. There are of course specific elements that are present in Cypriotism on both sides of the divide, including opposition to the hegemony of Greek/Turkish Cypriot nationalism, support for the federal reunification of Cyprus and the promotion of a Cypriot identity that transcends existing ethnic identifications (Hamit 2008: 49-50). Nonetheless, focusing on the differences is perhaps equally important, if we are to avoid overextending insights and findings originating within one community, over the other. In parallel to Bryant's objection in viewing Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism as mere sides of the same coin, it is worth pointing out that the Cypriotism present within each community should not be assumed to entail and acquire the same ideological characteristics. Since both the historical, as well as the contemporary experiences of the Cypriot conflict are significantly different for each community, including the specific versions of hegemonic nationalisms that are in place, the ideological response found in each Cypriotism understandably varies, reflecting the context within which it develops.

2.6. Defining Cypriotism Beyond the Kohn Dichotomy

In the literature surrounding Cyprus, Cypriotism has been typically approached through the lenses of the Kohn dichotomy. Mavratsas has equated Cypriotism with civic nationalism and Greek Cypriot nationalism with ethnic nationalism (1998: 88), while Peristianis also placed these positions within the civic-ethnic distinction (2000: 187). This is again repeated in the analysis of Gülseven on the shifting senses of national identity within the Turkish Cypriot community, in which he defined Cypriotism early on as a strictly civic identity (2020: 22). The theoretical limitations of the dichotomy tend to repeat themselves in the study of Cypriotism, to the extent that elements associated with 'ethnic nationalism' appear to be a priori excluded from consideration when examining its ideological claims, in contrast to Mavratsas' definition, which leaves open the possibility for a rich and complex ideological content. For example, while Mavratsas recognised that Cypriotism stresses a common

history, homeland and culture, he did little to explore these ideological dimensions, simply placing Cypriotism under the category of 'civic nationalism', since it opposes an 'ethnic' version of nationalism (1997: 723). Similarly, while Gülseven presented Cypriotism among Turkish Cypriots as constituted through a clearly defined internal other in the face of settlers and migrants from mainland Turkey, who are perceived as a threat to Turkish Cypriots' "identity, values, norms and lifestyle" (2020: 27), no consideration was taken over the extent to which such exclusions contradict the notion of Cypriotism as a strictly civic form of identification.

The tensed relationship between Turkish Cypriot versions of Cypriotism and the settler population, however, highlights the limitations of conceptualising Cypriotist notions of identity as fundamentally civic in character. In relation to the Turkish Cypriot polity, the settler population is not, in political terms, wholly located outside of the political community, as numerous settlers have been naturalised as citizens of the non-recognised TRNC (Akçali 2007: 74). In addition, it is commonly accepted that a significant number of settlers will be allowed to stay following the island's reunification, both as foreign nationals, as well as naturalised citizens, and will therefore be incorporated into the citizenry of a reunified Cyprus.[14] Despite this, and as Theodoros Rakopoulos has recently observed (2022: 23), settlers remain political outsiders regardless of their citizenship status in the TRNC, with Turkish Cypriots often rejecting their naturalisation as equal citizens. As negative views surrounding settlers are shared between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots (Christiansen 2005: 165), their demarcation as outsiders can be assumed to further extent, at present, in the context of a potential reunified polity. It is precisely this ongoing demarcation of settlers as internal others and political pariahs which indicates that citizenship is not, in-itself, a sufficient criterion for belonging, in formulations of Cypriotism within the Turkish Cypriot community. In contrast, more recent scholarship suggests that it is local cultural markers, rather that citizenship status, which are employed to produce claims to a distinct Cypriotness, stressing the cultural difference and assumed superiority of Turkish Cypriots vis-à-vis the settler population (Sadikoglu 2021: 177, Rakopoulos 2022: 23).

Yet, and even though Cypriotist discourse has often made claims of a common culture, history and territorial identity specific to the island, or has articulated its positions through an open discourse of exclusion, its ideological content has seldom been explored beyond the

[14] The exact number remains open to negotiation, changing in every new round of inter-communal talks. In the proposed Annan Plan of 2004, it was capped around 40,000 (Ker-Lindsay 2011: 88).

utilisation of the Kohn dichotomy, leading to Cypriotism being commonly equated simply with a minimalist version of state patriotism. Furthermore, little to no attention has been paid to Cypriotist perceptions and representations of other ethnic or cultural groups, such as non-Turkish migrant workers, asylum seekers and naturalised non-native citizens. This absence of enquiry is, perhaps, indicative of the effect that assumptions accompanying the Kohn dichotomy can have on the prioritisation of social research. If Cypriotism is defined as a civic form of nationalism, and civic nationalism is, in turn, a priori assumed to be inclusive, liberal and tolerant, more focus appears to have been placed on exploring this inclusivity, typically in relation to the rapprochement of the two ethnic communities, rather than in examining the peculiar ways through which Cypriotism may also formulate notions of exclusion, othering and difference, theoretical and empirical endeavours that could potentially produce findings contradicting the very conceptual framework of the Kohn dichotomy itself.

The identification of Cypriotism with civic nationalism appears to have further produced a certain conceptual confusion, as the civic-ethnic schema tends to equate Cypriotism with state identification and Greek/Turkish Cypriot nationalism with national identification, subsequently conflating positions held by the 'new', post-1974 Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalisms, with Cypriotism. Neophytos Loizides has noted that this conceptual confusion originates in outdated readings over Cypriot nationalism, which maintain that motherland nationalism has remained the dominant form of nationalism on the island. As Loizides (2007: 172) however clarified, nationalism in post-partitioned Cyprus is primarily driven by the identification of Cypriots with their corresponding island-specific ethnic communities, rather than their 'motherlands', each of which also maintains its own political unit, in the form of the Republic of Cyprus and the unrecognised Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.[15] These political units, in turn, have evolved to act as the nation-states of each ethnic community (Loizides: 2007: 172). Thus, to the extent that these political units, in their current politico-ideological form, act both as representatives of a single ethnic community and are commonly understood to be so, identification with them should not be assumed to be a process independent of, or autonomous from the hegemonic reproduction of these 'new' versions of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism. Rather, such identifications need to be comprehended as their necessary prerequisite. What should be

[15] Loizides employed the terms 'Greek Cypriotism' and 'Turkish Cypriotism' to describe these identifications, while maintaining the term 'Cypriotism' without an ethnic prefix for positions envisioning a meta-ethnic identity. For the sake of conceptual clarity and consistency, the terms employed by Loizides are not utilised in our discussion.

thoroughly examined instead is the ideological content assigned and mediated through these identifications, rather than merely the identifications themselves.

Returning to Mavratsas' original definition of Cypriotism, we can address the critical insights of Loizides by modifying it in a way that demarcates more clearly the differences of Cypriotism with the 'new' versions of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism. Thus, Cypriotism can be defined more accurately as:

> An ideology which argues that Cyprus has its own *sui generis* character and, thus, must be viewed as a *unified political entity* which is independent from both the motherlands of the two main communities of the island, that is, Greece and Turkey, while *also being irreducible to either of the two main communities culturally, historically or politically.*

Such a reformulated definition has the capacity to preserve the original meaning intended for the term, avoiding both the conceptual confusion that has emerged, as well as the restrictive theoretical framework of the Kohn dichotomy. Additionally, it leaves open the possibility for the examination of Cypriotism as a form of nationalism, without a priori defining it as such. Having established our definition, the next chapter will outline the methodology which has guided the data collection and analysis of the thesis.

3. Methodology

Methodological considerations remain crucial in sociology, as the methods chosen to be employed in the undertaking of empirical research have a direct impact on the data types collected, the consistency of data collection, as well as on their subsequent logical organization and analysis. Furthermore, in so far as social research is actively examining human activity, it is further characterized by ethical and methodological concerns arising from the examination of this activity, which are not particularly present in a hard science such as geology or chemistry. A description of sociological methodology cannot therefore be merely restricted to the clear exposition of the various data collection methods employed, but further necessitates clarifications on the epistemological framework within which such methods are utilized, the position of the researcher in relation to her topic of inquiry and the ethical concerns surrounding the specific research in question.

The thesis rests upon empirical data collected in the Republic of Cyprus. Data collection was formally undertaken for sixteen months, from September of 2020 to December of 2021. During this period, data was collected through participant observation of public protests, the carrying out of qualitative surveys amongst protest participants, and the identification and collection of political documents, consisting of the left-wing political magazines 'Eks Iparhis' and 'Kalemi', the anti-authoritarian magazine 'Entropia', as well as the articles published online on the pro-reunification 'Epanenosi2011' blog. In contrast to participant observation and qualitative surveys, which record and generate data reflecting contemporary events and concerns, the collected documentary data cover a broader historical period, having been originally produced and circulated between 1999 and 2020. This timeframe corresponds to the period after the opening of internal checkpoints, enabling civilians to cross the buffer zone dividing Cyprus for the first time since the island's de-facto partition.[16]

The need to restrict the scope of documentary data to a specific period arose first and foremost as a practical necessity, since unrestrained documentary collection risked the possibility of over-accumulating data, an outcome which risked failing to properly code and analyse them within the restricted timeframe of doctoral research. The post-2003 period examined was deemed an appropriate timeframe, as it is characterized by fundamental socio-

[16] While the checkpoints opened in 2003, the first political magazine examined; formally began circulation in 1999. Its pre-2003 issues were thus included in the collected data, to maintain the magazine's coherence.

political changes in relation to the internal dimensions of the Cyprus Dispute and the politics which accompany it, while also spanning 22 years, allowing for sufficient documentary data to be collected.

As data collection was undertaken during the first years of the covid-19 pandemic, several challenges to data collection arose, as the Republic of Cyprus' response to the covid-19 pandemic entailed the implementation of a series of emergency measures, which had a direct impact on data collection.[17] Many of these measures were similar to those enforced in other countries for the containment of the virus, such as the banning of specific social activities, the restriction of household mixing and the mandatory use of face coverings in most public spaces. Additional measures were however also enforced in relation to political activity, specifically through the implementation of an absolute ban on protesting. For prolonged periods of time, personal activity was further regulated through the government's SMS system. Citizens and permanent residents were expected to send an SMS containing their identification number, their postal code and a predefined code specifying one of the permitted reasons for going out, in order to be allowed to leave their home for a fixed number of times per day. Employers were further expected to fill in forms for their employees, in order for them to be allowed to go to work. On the occasion of being checked by a police patrol, failure to present an approved SMS response or a proper employee form carried a 300 euro fine, as was the case if an individual was found to violate any other measure in place.

The power to declare governmental measures was firmly concentrated in the executive, carried out through the issuing of ministerial decrees, while responsibility for the enforcement of the measures was granted primarily to the police, leading to the entrenchment of an authoritarian mode of governance that lasted until the end of the pandemic response (Ioannou & Charalambous 2023: 83). This authoritarian shift was reflected on an everyday level, through the increasing permanent presence of police patrols entrusted with the authority to stop and check any individual within a public space. However, the most serious incidence of authoritarianism took place on the 13th February, 2021, when anti-riot police attacked the first Os Dame (That's Enough) protest without provocation, leading to arrests and the serious injury of protestors (Charalambous 2021b). During the same period, social media were used by the police to identify and arrest individuals promoting public protesting, regardless of having participated in any protests themselves.

[17] In order to avoid diverging from the main methodological presentation, a detailed description of these challenges is presented in Appendix A.

These circumstances affected primarily the capacity to collect data from participatory observation, as the number of relevant protests and public activities remained low during the data collection period. More importantly, several concerns were raised in relation to the carrying out of face-to-face in-depth interviews, which formed an integral part of the original research design, as the carrying out of interviews would had exposed participants to unforeseen risks. As research participants were active in grassroots political activities, these risks did not merely entail catching the virus, but also of compromising personal information, risking potential arrests in a case of data leaks. As a result, the employed methodology was revaluated and readjusted in the early phase of data collection, with face-to-face in-depth interviews replaced by qualitative surveys. The shift to qualitative surveys enabled the maintenance of a higher level of anonymity, since the absence of audio and video recordings protect from linking collected data to identifiable individuals.

3.1. Epistemology and Positionality

The thesis follows an interpretivist epistemology, recognizing that social phenomena cannot be merely reduced to objects and facts located independently of the researcher; but as phenomena already intertwined within existing social relations, relations within which the social scientist also finds herself intertwined (Marvasti 2004: 5). From an interpretivist perspective, the social scientist is thus understood to be permanently situated within the broader social sphere, accompanied as it is by its own socio-political relations, cultural assumptions, historical burdens, and mediated meanings. Thus, in contrast to the disciplines associated with the hard sciences, social research, from an interpretivist standpoint, cannot be decontextualized completely from the social, political, economic, and cultural specificity from which it emerges. The social scientist's process of observation, data collection and analysis are therefore understood to maintain, to a certain extent, the researcher's peculiar subjective concerns, assumptions, and biases, themselves situated within the structures, concerns and contestations of broader society (Bhattacherjee 2012: 104). Drawing on this theoretical insight, interpretivist epistemology further argues that the social researcher cannot offer a definitive, objective representation of social reality (Bhattacharya 2008: 464). Rather, the researcher is only able to produce specific interpretations of social phenomena, while maintaining, in parallel, an active awareness of the circumstances within which these interpretations are situated, acknowledging the potentiality of their challenging and

replacement by future, and often unforeseen interpretations. While the collected data do emanate their own unique knowledge, they do so only as particularities. Their transcendence from their contextual specificity to a generalized mode of understanding becomes possible only through the employment of interpretation, rooted in this thesis in the utilization of theoretical tools and concepts originating in the field of nationalism studies. Being however also products of history, these conceptual tools are themselves determined by the broader development of mental activity, situated as they are in their own peculiar scholastic traditions, theoretical shifts, and philosophical ruptures.

Given the adoption of interpretivist epistemology, some reflections appear appropriate in relation to my positionality. Growing up in the Republic of Cyprus at the beginning of the 21st century, I was part of the first post-partition generation of Cypriots with access to the whole of the island, as crossing the buffer zone became possible for the first time since 1974 only in 2003, the year during which the first checkpoint was made accessible to the general population. Having access to the 'other' side of Cyprus had, unsurprisingly, a significant impact on my perceptions regarding the Cyprus Dispute, as meeting and interacting with the geographical space, as well as with Turkish Cypriots and other present inhabitants of northern Cyprus, contrasted and significantly contradicted the outdated depictions propagated in public commemorations, political discourse, and school curriculums. Nonetheless, physical access to a generally unknown geographical space was only one of the many effects that followed the opening of the checkpoints – as people crossed, so did information, which was disseminated through newspapers, films, books, documentaries, public discussions, and increasingly the internet. As official historical narrations depended upon the careful control of such information, its unprecedented availability made the dismantling of these narrations, a relatively easier, if emotionally painful, process. My critical interest in nationalism has thus been fundamentally shaped by these first experiences.

Nonetheless, my initial familiarization with questions over national identity arose through my interactions with the Nicosian leftist and anti-authoritarian extra-parliamentary milieu, which I first encountered in the autumn of 2009, after beginning to frequent Phaneromeni square alongside other local youth, an area in the walled city of Nicosia which acted, at the time, as a pivotal point for grassroots political activity (Iliopoulou & Pafsanias 2014: 177). Discussions over national identity were frequent within the crowd of the square, characterized as it was by a strong opposition to Greek Cypriot nationalism, a rejection of nationalist historiography and a strong commitment towards anti-racism. My first encounter with Cypriotist positions

originates in discussions and exchanges with friends and acquaintances within this extra-parliamentary milieu, as they attempted to grapple, like myself, with the historical and contemporary realities of Cyprus. Although I have never been a member of any of the milieu's political groups, I have repeatedly participated in their numerous protests, discussions, and cultural events, becoming familiar with their associated formal and informal political positions, learning in parallel to navigate the anti-authoritarian and leftist subcultural terrain of Nicosia.

My aforementioned participation in political initiatives, as well as my past research on the perspectives of this extra-parliamentary milieu (Pastellopoulos 2017, 2018), proved extremely helpful during the data collection period, as I required no gatekeeper to come in contact with these political circles and faced no significant barriers of entry, either for gaining access to protests, or for acquiring documents relevant to the research. Similarly, my connections, friendship and acquaintance with individuals involved in grassroots politics proved especially helpful in identifying and contacting participants interested in responding to qualitative surveys. As the data collection period was mainly carried out during the first two years of the covid-19 pandemic, my connections to the extra-parliamentary network of Nicosia provided a much-needed flexibility, as increasing personal reservations and formal restrictions to face-to-face interactions made establishing new relations difficult, time-consuming, and even ethically questionable.

The main concerns in relation to positionality therefore arose neither from barriers of entry nor from specific relations of power and privilege, but from over-familiarization, what is occasionally described in anthropology as 'going native'. Spending an extensive amount of time during data collection with individuals and political initiatives towards which I am, in general, sympathetic, entails necessarily the possibility of over-identification, resulting in the formulation of an overzealous emic description of the topic examined. The very awareness of this possibility is of course fundamental for its avoidance, as such a development is not predetermined in social research. The counterweight to such a development, beyond the typical distancing from the 'field' during data evaluation and chapter drafting, has been the careful reading, evaluation, and utilization of social theory, as it has developed in the field of nationalism studies. The utilization of theory enables the logical organization, evaluation and interpretation of collected data within broader conceptual frameworks, initiating a process of thinking about the topic in question in a manner distanced from the immediacy of the data themselves, overburdened as they are with their own internalized logic and ideological

meaning. This process has further facilitated the recognition that the case of national identification in Cyprus, despite presenting a plethora of complex and interesting historical and contemporary particularities, is neither exceptional nor unique in an intrinsic, essentialized manner.

3.2. Types of Collected Data

3.2.1. Locating and Collecting Documents

Two archives were utilized for the collection of documentary data. The first was the Cyprus Movements Archive (movementsarchive.org), an initiative that began in 2016 with the purpose of establishing an online, open-access digital archive concentrating various material from the extra-parliamentary leftist, anarchist, and radical milieu of Cyprus (Charalambous 2021a: 376). Chronologically, the archive has assembled material from the 1920s onwards, ranging from texts of the Communist Party of Cyprus, various past and contemporary anarchist publications and forgotten feminist texts, to more recent material from grassroots pro-reunification initiatives. The documents assembled on the archive have included, so far, brochures, magazines, leaflets, stickers, books, videos, and online articles, with material from previous decades having been digitized through scanning, making them available in PDF format. The contents of printed material are also occasionally transcribed, further improving accessibility, with the archived material being further organized under the various political groups and initiatives that had produced and circulated them.

By the time I had begun my data collection in 2020 the Cyprus Movements Archive concentrated an extensive array of material, making document collection a significantly faster and easier process in comparison to my previous experiences with archival research in Cyprus, during which I had to explore unorganized private archives, digitize located documents, and logically organize material from scratch. Nonetheless, while the collection of the Cyprus Movements Archive was extensive and readily available, it was not complete, since numerous notable magazines had not been digitized yet. Additional archival research was therefore carried out in the archive of social space Kaymakkin, a self-managed social space located in Nicosia, which was originally opened in 2015 by the anti-authoritarian group Syspirosi Atakton (Pastellopoulos 2022a: 60). This informal archive holds political magazines, leaflets and brochures from Cyprus, as well as material from various other

countries (including Greece, the UK and France), providing an ideal collection for the location of additional texts.[18]

Establishing access to the Kaymakkin archive was not difficult, as I have carried out research utilizing its resources twice before. I therefore did not require a gatekeeper, and after reconnecting with my contacts and acquaintances in the extra-parliamentary political circles of Nicosia, I was entrusted with a key to the social space and the freedom to enter it at any time for the purposes of archival research. In retrospect this proved quite helpful, as Kaymakkin, like most other spaces, suspended its activities for prolonged periods of time due to the covid-19 pandemic and the accompanied governmental response. Having established access to Kaymakkin, I subsequently borrowed whole sets of magazine issues, evaluated their content, and moved on to systematically digitize articles of interest through the employment of my personal A4 scanner. Digitization enabled access to the data for later analysis, while reducing potential damage to the original documents, which were returned to Kaymakkin after digitization and placed back in their original folders.

The documents collected from the Cyprus Movements Archive and the Kaymakkin archive consist of issues from three magazines and the online entries of a website. The first is the magazine 'Eks Iparhis' (Εξ Υπαρχής, From the Beginning), located in the Kaymakkin archive. The magazine circulated from 1999 to 2004, running for 52 issues. While maintaining a leftist ideological orientation, it further accommodated various political perspectives during its publication history, ranging from positions associated with the New Left and social liberalism, to Trotskyism and the pro-reunification rapprochement movement. As crossing the buffer zone was generally not possible during most of its publication history, the magazine also acted as a communication bridge, circulating left-wing Turkish Cypriot perspectives to a Greek Cypriot audience by occasionally publishing translated texts of Turkish Cypriot leftists. The general openness to discussion and debate is also notable, as the magazine's editorial team appears to have facilitated the publication of a diverse array of critical perspectives on key issues, including national identity, electoral campaigns, and the proposed federal solution to the island's de-facto partition.

[18] The origins of the archive go back to 2008, as it originally formed part of the collection of another social space, Agrammata, which operated as an independent library in the walled city of Nicosia (Ioannou 2019: 223).

The second magazine thoroughly examined is ‘Kalemi’ (Καλέμι, The Chisel) which ran from 2008 to 2011, numbering a total of 18 issues. The magazine was located in the Cyprus Movements Archive. It was officially published by the Greek Cypriot section of the pro-reunification Platform ‘United Cyprus’, a bi-communal teachers’ group. Circulating after the opening of the checkpoints in 2003, as well as in the aftermath of the failure to reunify the island through the proposed Annan plan in 2004, the magazine maintained a pro-federation position, accommodating perspectives that we can associate with social liberalism and the broader political left, focusing on educational policy, nationalism and the reunification of the island. Like Eks Iparhis before it, Kalemi also printed translated texts written by pro-reunification Turkish Cypriot authors.

The next collection of documentary data that was systematically examined originate on the website ‘Epanenosi2011’ (Επανένωση, Reunification). Established in 2009 and remaining active until 2012, the website aimed to concentrate pro-reunification texts and facilitate a public dialogue in support of the federal reunification of Cyprus. The website hosted texts and articles produced throughout the internet, accumulating material from a plethora of dispersed sources, including original articles published directly on the website, entries originating in political and personal blogs, as well as formal group statements and announcements. Ideologically, Epanenosi2011 was undoubtedly the most diverse source I encountered, accommodating perspectives from leftist, liberal, anti-authoritarian and even centre-right positions. The website went offline in 2014 as its original domain (epanenosi.com) expired, but its content was subsequently uploaded to a new domain (unifycyprus.wordpress.com), which I located through the Cyprus Movements Archive. Unfortunately, the discussions that took place under each article have not been preserved.

The last set of documents I examined are the issues of the magazine ‘Entropia’ (Εντροπία, Entropy), which was first published in 2013, running for 16 issues by 2020. The magazine is officially published by the anti-authoritarian group Syspirosi Atakton, one of the co-organizers of the 2021 anti-governmental Os Dame (That’s Enough) mass protests discussed below, and includes articles written with an anarchist or left-wing political perspective, addressing issues ranging from feminism and workers’ rights to queer activism, ecology, and reunification. All issues were located through the Cyprus Movements Archive, except for issue 16, which was collected at social space Kaymakkin, as it was published during my stay in Cyprus. Each issue typically focused on a specific theme, with texts not addressing the issue’s theme published under the category ‘Opinions’. Although Syspirosi Atakton

maintains an anti-authoritarian perspective, its magazine did not restrict its content to texts strictly following such a position, accommodating a variety of left-leaning texts.

3.2.2. Participant Observation

Participant observation was directly affected by the pandemic response enforced in the Republic of Cyprus. This response included extensive restrictions on social activity and crowd mixing, both during the three national lockdowns, as well as during much of the period when lockdowns were not technically in force. The implemented regulations severely restricted cultural activities, extensively limited the right to cross the island's buffer zone, and significantly limited freedom of movement for prolonged periods of time. Participant observation therefore focused primarily on relevant grassroots public political protests, the only consistent physical political activity taking place during 2020-21.[19] A digital research diary was additionally kept throughout the data collection period, in order to keep track of local political developments, the various mobilizations taking place and the ever-changing regulations relating to the pandemic.

The first notable mobilizations were the anti-corruption grassroots protests that were held in October and November of 2020, following the release of footage from an undercover investigation carried out by the Al Jazeera Media Network. The investigation exposed widespread corruption in the Cypriot government's golden passport program, implicating prominent political figures, including the speaker of the House of Representatives (Pegg 2020). The first anti-corruption mobilization was held on the 15th October outside the Filoxenia Conference Centre in Nicosia, where the parliament was temporarily convening due to the ongoing pandemic, and saw a turnout of a few thousand protestors. This first protest was not called by any existing political organization, but rather by a hastily formed Facebook group called 'Active Citizens'. It was characterized by anti-corruption slogans, banners, and chants with no clear ideological content, beyond the obvious opposition to political corruption. Nonetheless, members of the extra-parliamentary left participated in this protest with their own, highly politicized banners and chants. A second anti-corruption protest was subsequently organized by the extra-parliamentary left on the 18th October, voicing in its demands also support for migrants and for the island's reunification, as well as

[19] The period saw numerous mobilizations taking place, several of which were organized by the local anti-vaccination movement, which opposed all pandemic restrictions, as well as the vaccination effort. These protests did not fall under the scope of my research and do not form part of my participant observation.

demands for social justice and the protection of the environment. The turnout was substantially lower, numbering in the hundreds. A third protest was further organized by Active Citizens on the 6th November outside of the presidential palace, but the turnout was significantly lower. The increasingly lower turnout at the anti-corruption protests, combined with the subsequent prohibition of all public protests by the government towards the end of November, appear to have had discouraged any future mobilization initiatives outside of the extra-parliamentary left.

Nonetheless, mobilizations saw a further surge in 2021, as multiple anti-governmental mass protests were held in Nicosia. These protests were organized by the 'Os Dame' (Ως Δαμέ, That's enough) coordination committee, which was formed in February of 2021 by various political groups active primarily within the extra-parliamentary left of Nicosia and Limassol. The grievances of the Os Dame protests were characterized by opposition to authoritarianism and the general logic of the pandemic response, opposition to the formal partition of the island, support for its federal reunification, calls for the funding of public health, education and social welfare and demands for the protection of the environment (Charalambous 2021b). At their peak, the Os Dame protests appear to have been the largest political mobilizations held in the Republic of Cyprus in the past decade.

The first Os Dame protest was held on the 13th February, amidst the second national lockdown. It was met with repression by the police, who used excessive force to disperse the protestors, leading to widespread criticism towards both the government and the police (Charalambous 2021b). As a response to the use of excessive force, a second march was held on the 20th February, in which around 10,000 people participated (Lyritsas 2021). A third protest was further held on the 27th March, numbering around 2,000 people (Os Dame 2021), while a fourth protest, focusing primarily on opposition to partition and support towards federal reunification, took place on the 18th December, in coordination with the institutional Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot left, with the latter organizing its own parallel march on the other side of Nicosia's buffer zone.

A number of smaller protests also took place during my stay in Cyprus. These included two informal bi-communal gatherings in the walled city of Nicosia in April of 2021, at a period when the checkpoints remained closed. These gatherings were held near Paphos Gate, at a specific spot in the walled city where the width of the buffer zone is minimal, enabling interaction between individuals gathered on each side of the buffer zone fence. Another

informal bi-communal protest was held in June of 2021, on the first day when the checkpoints officially reopened, with people gathering in Eleftheria square to cross together to the northern section of the city, gathering with Turkish Cypriot peace activists at Büyük Han. While I attended a number of smaller mobilizations during my stay, including a small left-wing protest against authoritarianism, a protest commemorating the murder of Greek anti-fascist Pavlos Fyssas by members of the Greek far-right and a mobilization against the destruction of cultural heritage in the walled city of Nicosia, these protests did not prove to be relevant to the research topic in question.

The Os Dame mobilizations acted as an interesting field where symbolic political practices could be observed and contrasted with dominant narratives, symbols and discourses, during a period when public social activity and political expression was otherwise significantly restricted. I primarily drew data by documenting banners, chants, and slogans, either by taking photographs, or by writing short descriptions in my diary. Additional complimentary data were gathered by recording public statements made by the Os Dame committee, by collecting various leaflets distributed at the protests and by situating data within the broader articulated discourse surrounding these mobilizations, particularly in relation to the Os Dame protests, which were either ignored, or scorned by government officials. Nonetheless, it should be noted that participant observation wielded a lower data turnout than was anticipated prior to my arrival in Cyprus. As the pandemic shifted public concerns to new and unfamiliar areas of political contestation, at the same time as the pandemic response restricted those cultural and political events which have typically been taking place (such as bi-communal marches, public discussions, concerts, and cultural festivals), participant observation of events directly relevant to the research remained relatively limited during the data collection period.

3.2.3. Qualitative Surveys

In the original research design, semi-structured face-to-face in-depth interviews were expected to be conducted for the collection of participant-generated data, and an interview guide was prepared for this purpose during my early stay in Cyprus. However, methodological complications linked to the pandemic arose and continued to intensify during the data collection period, raising concerns over the viability of employing interviews in either digital, or physical form (Appendix A). Evaluating alternative methods, qualitative surveys were selected as a suitable viable alternative, accommodating participant-generated

data within the peculiar circumstances that had emerged during the first years of the covid-19 pandemic. Qualitative surveys have been more consistently employed in the field of psychology (Braun et al. 2017: 251), as well as in quantitative research, which occasionally allows for limited input of qualitative data by participants (Braun & Terry 2017: 16). A qualitative survey, much like its quantitative counterpart, is characterized by the generation of data through the responses of participants to a predesigned set of questions. However, as the generated data are primarily or exclusively qualitative in nature, participants are asked to provide their responses in writing, rather than to provide responses to closed-ended questions that are in turn readily and easily quantifiable.

Given that qualitative surveys are not commonly employed in sociological research, it is worth reflecting on the type of data the method generates. Unlike semi-structured interviews, which are characterized by the spontaneity of response on the part of the interviewee, qualitative surveys are intrinsically reflective. On the one hand, participants are provided with extensive time to return, and thus rephrase their responses; while on the other, the act of articulating responses in written form necessitates an engagement with a reflective thinking process, in contrast to the immediacy of direct verbal responses we tend to find in interviews. Informal comments provided by participants on the method were indicative of this, as numerous participants informed me that responding to the survey made them reflect on topics that they typically did not consider in such depth. The distance between researcher and participant is also an intrinsic characteristic of the method, with some evidence indicating that responses to qualitative surveys can be more detailed than responses generated from interviews, at least on more sensitive topics (Braun et al. 2017: 5). Qualitative surveys should therefore not be mistaken as an adaptation of interviewing to a written form; but should instead be comprehended as an independent method generating its own unique, characteristic set of data. My experience with qualitative surveys confirmed findings available in the methodological literature reporting that the method returns a densely written, but nonetheless rich body of data (Braun et al. 2020: 642).

Qualitative surveys further entail several advantages that are worth outlining. In contrast to interviews, qualitative surveys are generally less time-consuming for the researcher, as multiple surveys can be sent out at the same time, while no transcription is typically necessary after the surveys are returned. In addition, participants can respond to the surveys in their own space, pace, and time, without having to arrange an online or physical meeting with the researcher. Participants can maintain a certain flexibility in their responses, if they

choose to do so – one participant, for example, included a poem in her answers. Certain limitations are however also evident. While not a concern for the purposes of this research, literacy is essential for the carrying out of qualitative surveys, creating restrictions not merely for illiterate individuals, but also for individuals less comfortable with articulating their views in writing. Two of the participants, for example, pointed to me their clear preference for interviews. Another limitation is the significant gap experienced between sending out surveys and receiving them. On some occasions, this gap was a mere couple of weeks, while in others, it took months and repeated reminding, as completing qualitative surveys is in general a more time-consuming exercise for participants in comparison to interviews. Finally, qualitative surveys do not entail the flexibility we can find in interviews, where the interviewer can ask follow-up questions depending on the initial responses of the interviewee, modify the original set of questions on the spot, or explore particular themes as they emerge within the interview itself.

Adapting the interview guide to the format of a qualitative survey was therefore not a straightforward process, with the designing of the survey drawing primarily from the guidance and advice located in the available methodological literature (Braun & Clark & Gray 2017, Braun & Terry 2017, Braun et al. 2020), rather than the structure of the original interview guide itself.[20] Questions were designed to be open-ended, the introductory text accompanying the survey aimed to encourage people to write as much as they wished, and the response boxes were significantly lengthened, in order to encourage longer responses. Questions regarding age, gender, and educational background, which are often placed last in quantitative surveys, were presented at the very beginning, since this information is relatively impersonal in relation to the information requested by the questions characterizing qualitative surveys. Questions were further reduced to 8, from their original 10 in the interview guide, in order to reduce the chances of participant fatigue. Furthermore, the survey was offered in both Greek and English, while the introductory text encouraged people to respond in any language or linguistic variant they preferred, including writing in Greeklish (using Latin characters to write Greek), or answering in the Cypriot Greek language variety. Although a participant could respond by writing on a hard copy of the survey, this was not proven necessary, as all participants were sufficiently technologically literate.

[20] The English version of the qualitative survey is presented in Appendix B. Although it was ultimately left unused, the interview guide draft is further presented in Appendix C for the purposes of documentation and future reference.

The aim of employing qualitative surveys was to collect participant-generated data from individuals that were active in the extra-parliamentary milieu of Nicosia, and in particular within those political circles whose ideas and perspectives were generally associated with opposition to Greek Cypriot nationalism, support for the island's reunification and the promotion of an alternative, Cypriot identity. The research population therefore consisted of individuals that were either members of political groups, or were actively participating in the actions and mobilizations of those groups. Identifying and eventually contacting potential participants depended, on the one hand, on their participation in grassroots protests, and on the other, upon my extra-parliamentary networks, which significantly removed barriers of entry. While not all participants were members of political groups, they were all politically active during the period in which they were contacted, and all had actively participated in the 2021 Os Dame protests. Initial contact was carried out online, informing of the general aims of the research and asking for potential interest, while the survey, participant information leaflet and consent form were subsequently provided via e-mail.

In total, 18 surveys were collected. All participants were younger than 45 years old, with the average participant being in her early 30s. In terms of gender, 6 participants identified as female, 10 as male, one preferred not to provide information and another one identified as genderqueer. One participant who identified as male also further noted down being genderqueer. All participants had completed tertiary education, with only one not holding a postgraduate degree, while three participants held, or were in the process of acquiring a doctorate degree. While all participants formally belonged to the Greek Cypriot community, when asked to which state-recognized community they formally belonged, two refused to provide information, while one participant provided additional explanatory information in the provided response, even as the accompanied explanatory text explicitly stated that their perceptions on identity would be covered in the survey questions. This practice is indicative of how participants can challenge, if they choose to do so, the very logic permeating the qualitative survey itself.

3.3. Ethical Considerations

While my research population did not technically include vulnerable groups, the peculiar circumstances which unfolded during the data collection period raised additional questions in relation to the ethical practise of social research. On the one hand, the covid-19 pandemic raised ethical concerns in relation to face-to-face interactions, as the danger of such interactions, even if fully acknowledged by participants, could indirectly endanger non-participants through the spreading of SARS-CoV-2. On the other hand, the period saw an increasingly authoritarian turn in the Republic of Cyprus, with the entrenchment of a long-term ban on protesting, the arrest of activists and protestors and the utilization of police violence for the repression of political dissent. Ethical considerations can therefore be divided between privacy considerations in relation to participants, public health concerns related to the covid-19 pandemic, and concerns surrounding government authoritarianism.[21]

All participant-generated data were anonymised at the point of collection, including surveys and consent forms. This was a straightforward process, as surveys produce more anonymised data than interviews, which presuppose sensitive audio recordings that could potentially be used to identify an individual if leaked. No sensitive information was recorded in my diary entries, in order to maintain anonymity of participants, as well as the political activity of other individuals. No information was collected in relation to a participant's membership to political groups, to safeguard against potential identification of participants. E-mail exchanges were promptly permanently deleted after receiving completed surveys, and the anonymised digital files were securely stored on the University of Warwick's private cloud storage system. Any additional informal exchanges with participants through social media, mobile phones or instant chatting apps, were also permanently deleted. While photographs from public protests are a notably sensitive form of data, additional care was taken to photograph signs and banners, rather than individuals. The widespread use of face masks during protests unintentionally provided a further layer of anonymity to such data.

Ethical considerations emanating from the unique circumstances created by the covid-19 pandemic were a constant concern during data collection, since the potential spread of the SARS-CoV-2 virus could endanger both individuals I interacted with, as well as their loved ones and acquaintances. The adoption of qualitative surveys dispelled such concerns

[21] The original research design, as well as subsequent alterations, were approved by the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Sub-Committee (HSSREC) of the University of Warwick.

significantly, as no face-to-face interaction was necessary to acquire participant-generated data. Nonetheless, interaction with individuals continued in various contexts, necessitating the employment of particular strategies. The wearing of a face mask and social distancing was consistently practised during my participant observation in public protests, as well during interactions in enclosed spaces. Being provided with a key to social space Kaymakkin further enabled me to carry out archival research with minimal face-to-face interaction, avoiding the need of contacting individuals to physically grand me access to the archive. I further prioritized my vaccination against SARS-CoV-2, receiving three doses of the vaccine as soon as they became available for my age group. Conducting regular tests became a further common practise during my stay in Cyprus, to the extent that was possible, given the various limitations to accessing free testing, that accompanied the government's mass-testing campaign.

3.4. Coding

As the present research focuses specifically on senses of, and claims over, Cypriot identity originating from a particular ideological perspective, the coding of data did not aim to identify in-depth the homogeneity or heterogeneity of other contested political topics, such as capitalism, economic policy, the role of the state, gender relations, environmentalism, and human rights. The collected data express a variety of political positions associated with social progressivism and the extra-parliamentary left. This is directly reflected by the collected documents, with all sharing a characteristically 'anti-nationalist' character, which, in the context of Cyprus, is equated with opposition to the various expressions of Greek (Cypriot) and Turkish (Cypriot) nationalism. Nonetheless, the collected documents were ideologically heterogenous, in so far as they included positions ranging from social liberalism and Trotskyism to anti-authoritarianism and anarchism, as well as various perspectives associated with the broader New Left. Thus, differences in relation to topics such as capitalism, the role of the state, political organization and electoral participation are quite evident, as is the incompatibility of various perspectives regarding these aforementioned subjects.

This heterogeneity is, however, not a limiting factor, but rather indicative of the phenomenon we are seeking to investigate. As Alan Finlayson observed, nationalism is never located as a distinct political ideology in and for itself; but is rather always found infused with additional ideological elements, ranging from conservativism and liberalism, to Marxism, feminism and

even environmentalism (1998: 113). As Finlayson has argued, this is inherent to the logic of nationalism, since its ideological content centres precisely in the ongoing defining of the ‘people’, the discursive (re)production of meanings ascribed to specific conceptualizations of the nation that in turn both limit and enable their utilization by a variety of political ideologies. These definitions and meanings are in turn not independent of contextual political contestations and claims, as the peculiar ways through which the ‘people’ are constituted legitimizes specific political aims, while attempting at the very same time to delegitimize and limit others. As Finlayson clarified:

> Nationalism is not an ideology but rather ideological; an operation utilized by ideologies. Nationalism can be conceived of as a discursive operation acting to define a specific people in a specific way such that certain political claims may be held to derive from this. Its central discursive project is to construct a 'we' and give that 'we' a meaning (Finlayson 1998: 113).

It is thus not through the identification of an absolute ideological convergence, but rather through the persistency of a series of narratives and claims over the ‘people’, despite other fundamental ideological differences in pressing political issues, which indicate that a more general, nationalistic logos is at play. In the context of Cyprus, where the ideological criteria for membership to the local ‘people’ remains highly disputed, as is also the identity, history and collective political aims of these ‘people’, the association of specific ideological perspectives with Greek/Turkish nationalism and Cypriotism tends to be systematic. Right-wing ideologies, such as conservativism, neoliberalism, and ultra-nationalism, remain inherently linked to Greek/Turkish nationalism, since the former has stayed hegemonic from the 1950s onwards, intertwining itself with state institutions and entrenching its discourse as the discourse of political legitimacy and power (Ioannou 2020: 183). In contrast, socially progressive and left-leaning positions, which typically aim to significantly alter, in some form, existing social relations and political dynamics, are associated with Cypriotist perspectives, while not necessarily being exhausted to them (Mavratsas 1997: 723). The dominance of ‘nationalism’ and the ‘nation’ as signifiers of the status quo and of established socio-political relations, of which the hegemony of Greek/Turkish nationalism is an integral part, appears to further restrict the utilization of standard nationalistic terminology when attempting to articulate an unconventional, oppositional discourse over the ‘people’, leading to the employment of alternative terminologies and signifiers (Mavratsas 1997: 723).

Taking the aforementioned context into consideration, qualitative thematic analysis was employed for the scrutinization of the collected data. As a method, thematic analysis is well established in qualitative social research and is typically employed for the analysis of interviews and documents (Prior 2008: 833). The method entails the establishment of close familiarization with the collected data, which in turn enables the researcher to detail the perspectives and accompanied meaning emanating from these data, organizing them through the identification of repeated patterns, or themes (Bowen 2009: 32). The identification of a final set of themes further enables the presentation of the data in a logical fashion, as well as their interpretation through the employment of appropriate theoretical tools. For the purposes of this thesis, the identification of themes was established through the employment of a standard coding process (Ayres 2008: 867) in five stages, as outlined below:

1) Coding was initiated through a first evaluation and organization of the data, by identifying which articles, texts, online entries, photographs, and diary entries were relevant to the focus of the research. This process concentrated extensively on documents and data collected through participant observation. It was not applied to collected surveys, as they were already both relevant and logically organized. This first evaluation was followed by the reading of documents and surveys, to establish an initial familiarization with the data. This evaluation, as well as all subsequent familiarization, was carried out in the languages in which the data were collected (Standard Modern Greek, Cypriot Greek, and English). Selected translations were carried out by me after the finalization of thematic analysis, and only for the purpose of presenting extracts within the thesis.
2) Following the evaluation and establishment of a first familiarity with the data, each set of data was examined independently to establish deeper familiarization. This process included the qualitative surveys, the three magazines and the Epanenosi2011 website. Data derived from participant observation were approached as an autonomous data set. A first set of themes was established, with patterns repeating themselves identified, organized, and compared.
3) Following the establishment of a first set of themes, the collected data were examined a second time, to establish in-depth familiarization and evaluate the established themes. This second round of familiarization gave rise to more precise themes, which were compared with the initial themes and evaluated in relation to the data. Themes that were closely connected were merged, while themes that did not appear to

adequately reflect the data following in-depth familiarization, were dropped. This process established the final set of themes, which consisted of senses of Cypriotness, representations of demographic groups, language, alternative narratives, and perspectives on federation and the status quo.

4) Following the establishment of themes, each theme was further scrutinized, to examine internal differentiations and divergences. For example, while historical narrations follow a similar pattern in relation to their claims and opposition to Greek (Cypriot) nationalist historiography, there are important differences in the way specific narratives are structured, as well as the topics they address. This scrutinization was further carried out in relation to data type, as documents cover a specific historical time, while qualitative surveys reflect the contemporary thoughts and perceptions of research participants. This process enabled the first sketching of chapters, and the initiation of the process of theoretical interpretation.
5) At the final stage, the data corresponding to each theme were again examined in detail independently, in order to enable their presentation in a consistent fashion within their corresponding chapters.

It is important to maintain an awareness of the limitations engrained within a chosen methodology. While thematic analysis is useful and effective in providing insights over the views, thoughts and discourse expressed by the accumulated data, it remains fundamentally descriptive (Ayres 2008: 868). Thus, conclusions derived from thematic analysis do not necessarily inform us adequately of the impact, effect, and influence of the identified set of perspectives on political practice and social action. While this thesis primarily concerns itself with views and ideas, rather than social and political activity, these limitations should be highlighted in order to avoid falling into what Shamus Jerolmack and Colin Khan have defined as the “attitudinal fallacy” (2014: 201) – the false assumption that a reliable account of social action can be inferred and reconstructed merely by generalizing information derived from an individual’s sentiments, recollections and stated beliefs (Jerolmack & Khan 2014: 201). The findings of this thesis do not therefore present a definite account of social, or political action attributable to Cypriotism, nor should they be interpreted as a direct reflection of such action. A carefully crafted ethnographic methodology would perhaps be more suitable for such a future endeavour.

On a final note, it should be recognized that the established themes are themselves situated within a specific temporal moment. As the products of sociological analysis, they are

necessarily embedded within a broader process of interpretation that is itself dependant upon the methodological and theoretical tools presently available for the collection, coding and analysis of their corresponding data. Situated within this process, the established themes and empirical findings presented in this thesis cannot be simply perceived as a final verdict on their object of analysis, but as a particular instance in its theoretical clarification. As it so often happens in social research, future examinations of the topic will inevitably produce alternative interpretations, placing their focus on themes whose significance may not be readily apparent within the present context.

4. Descriptions of Cypriotness

Drawing on both left-wing political magazines and participants' responses, this chapter examines perceptions surrounding Cypriotness, examining how Cypriot identity is consistently asserted as a non-national, inclusive, pluralistic and culturally heterogenous identity, leaving Cypriotness itself largely undetailed. The chapter further highlights the attachment of Cypriot identity to the geographical territory of the island, defined through its differentiation from Greek and Turkish national identity, constituting Cypriotness as independent and autonomous from Greekness and Turkishness. Noting that the very notion of 'identity' is occasionally questioned or downplayed, the chapter further emphasises how Cypriotness is represented antagonistically to Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism, challenging their corresponding notions of national collective belonging.

If we are to properly follow the arguments surrounding Cypriotness, it is important to begin with two key clarifications prior to the presentation of empirical findings. Firstly, we must keep in mind the meaning commonly attached to the term 'nationalism' within the context Cyprus. The term is typically used to describe a specific political ideology, a set of political and ideological positions upon which positive or negative judgments can be made. This political ideology is in turn understood to be connected with political positions resting on a hyphenated rhetoric surrounding national identity. This usage of the term is reflected in the everyday political language of the Republic of Cyprus. The word for nation in the Greek language is 'ethnos', which corresponds to both the words 'nation' and 'ethnic group', with nationalism (εθνικισμός, ethnikismos) in turn being associated with political claims surrounding an ethnic group, as no single word in the language adequately describes non-ethnic nations (Pastellopoulos 2018: 14).

The second clarification relates to the entanglement of Greek Cypriot nationalism with broader claims over historical narration, national culture, and identity (Anastasiou 2008a: 31). As Greek Cypriot nationalism has retained a prolonged position of hegemony, the claim to a Hellenic identity is intertwined with broader ideological claims over national belonging, history and political legitimacy (Anastasiou 2008a: 44). Greek Cypriot nationalism's main ideological claims largely converge with its 'motherland' cousin and follow a similar pattern found in various nationalist ideologies across the Western world. Cyprus is viewed as an inherently Hellenic cultural and geographical space across history, with the majority of its inhabitants understood to be ethnically Greek, belonging to the undivided category that is the

Greek nation (Anastasiou 2008a: 47). National culture is perceived to be homogeneous, and membership to the national community remains a largely ancestral prerogative (Anastasiou 2008a: 47). Greek Cypriot nationalism thus places the Greek Cypriot community in a position of heightened political importance. Naturalized as the historically entrenched ethnic community of the island, which formally constitutes the majority of the state's citizens, the community is ascertained as the legitimate bearer of political power (Mavratsas 1997: 727).

Since its emergence as a coherent political perspective, Cypriotism has challenged these ideological claims. A key position of Cypriotist discourse is the differentiation of Cyprus from its national 'motherlands', the claim of a "sui generis character" (Mavratsas 1997: 721) that places the island outside the categories of the Greek and Turkish nations, with Cypriot identity evoked as a meta-ethnic identity acting as an umbrella term for the inclusion of both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots under a single polity. The view that Cyprus is an inherently Hellenic island is repeatedly disputed (Mavratas 1997: 721), closeness, rather than hostility, between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots is emphasised (Peristianis 2008: 224) and attachment to the cultural and geographical contextuality of the island is often evoked (Rakopoulos 2022: 8).

This ideological conflict has also been reflected in the political language of the Republic, as the use of contradictory signifiers for the description of the (Greek) Cypriot population reflects the traditional division between the nationalist right and the political left. The term 'Cypriot Hellenism' (Papadakis 1998b: 154), for example, is commonly employed to describe Greek Cypriots in dominant Greek Cypriot nationalist discourses, subsuming the community under the broader category of Hellenism. Within such discourses, Cyprus is often further described as the 'particular country' of Greek Cypriots, implying that Greece remains the universal homeland for Greeks living outside its borders (Peristianis 2008: 243). In contrast, leftist discourses typically employ the term 'Cypriot people', which is perceived as a more inclusive category, as Turkish Cypriots, as well as members of the island's smaller communities, can be subsumed under it (Papadakis 1998b: 155). As it has been documented by Caesar Mavratsas (1997: 728), these antithetical viewpoints were further reflected in the political slogans of the post-1974 period. On one side, the slogan 'Cyprus is Greek' clearly expressed the position of Greek Cypriot nationalism, while on the other, the slogan 'Cyprus Belongs to its People' reflected the direct opposition to such a claim.

It has been further argued that the terms signify competing paradigms surrounding history. While the former projects the Cypriot experience as a particularity of a broader Hellenic history, burdened by Greco-Turkish tension and conflict, the latter places the specificity of Cypriot history at its centre, emphasizing the historical coexistence of the two ethnic communities of the island (Papadakis 1998b: 155). As Nicos Peristianis further noted, identification with Cypriotness correlates with a feeling of closeness towards Turkish Cypriots, in parallel to a distancing from Greece, while Hellenic identification has the inverse correlation (Peristianis 2008: 252). The literature paints an image of a conflicting set of identifications, carrying contradictory meanings in relation to national imagining and inter-communal reconciliation.

A number of these observations are reaffirmed in this thesis, as the discourses found in the collected documents and in participants' responses follow a similar pattern. Given national identities are rejected, official historical narratives are objected to, and the meaning attached to signifiers of identity is often challenged. Nonetheless, the identified claims over Cypriot identity also deviate in important ways from the findings located in the available literature. Rather than an umbrella category, Cypriotness is perceived as fundamentally incompatible with Greek identity, Cypriot identity is in turn claimed to entail a significant extension of cultural pluralism that often exceeds simple bi-communalism, while at points, the very notion of 'identity' is itself questioned.

4.1. Displacing Greekness

A first notable observation is the consistency with which participants, consisting of individuals active in grassroots, anti-nationalist pro-reunification politics, challenged hegemonic notions surrounding national identity. Rather than presenting Cypriotness as compatible with ethnic identification, all participants either rejected Greek national identity altogether, or downplayed Greekness in favour of a Cypriotness perceived as an alternative identification that was not reducible to 'Greekness'. Claims surrounding Cypriot identity were systematically accompanied by the rejection of fundamental notions of Greek Cypriot nationalism, representing Cyprus outside the imaginary of the Greek nation. These representations, in turn, presented Cypriotness as incompatible with notions of Greekness, as an autonomous identity differentiated from the national identities commonly associated with

the island. For example, Ektoras, a Greek Cypriot man in his late 20s, presented Cypriot identity in the following manner:

> In my view Cypriot identity is a patchwork of the identities of the surrounding geographical area, and mainly of the Middle East. Beyond the obvious natural characteristics that are similar, I consider that to this broader physiognomy, cunning, the predatory economic mentality, and our interpersonal relationships have common ground. We are a social people, cheerful and giving (under conditions), but at the same time permanently suspicious, adventurous, and sometimes afraid of taking responsibility. In terms of culture, as it has been shaped through the arts, history, the interaction with other peoples and the geological and geographical features of Cyprus, I believe we have a unique and distinct identity, which is unfortunately underrepresented, overshadowed by bestowed, or adopted identities based on nationalism (Ektoras, Greek Cypriot, Male).

Situating Cypriotness within the cultural and territorial space of the Middle East, Hellenocentric positions, which claim Cyprus as part of a European, Western cultural space, are in parallel rejected (Peristianis 2008: 26). In contrast, Cypriot identity is here connected with the non-Western world, while no representation of 'purity' is attempted – Cypriot identity is signified as blended, a "patchwork" of the various identities connected with the Middle East. Nonetheless, this blending is claimed to produce a "unique and distinct" identity, with Cypriotness being restricted to the territory of the island. Greek and Turkish national identities are further decentred, as they are argued to be "bestowed" or "adopted", entailing a degree of artificiality, while Cypriot identity escapes such a description – the implication being that Cypriotness entails a certain degree of genuineness that local expressions of Greekness and Turkishness cannot claim. Ektoras further elaborated in his own self-description that:

> I consider myself a Cypriot and always define myself as such. Considering that I fit at least most of the characteristics that in my opinion shape the Cypriot identity, and for obvious reasons of origin, I believe that this is the obvious choice. I love my country, with all that is good and bad in it, and I see myself as a part of the perspective for it to become as great as it deserves to be. Being an "internationalist" on the other hand, I consider myself part of the human race and more broadly of nature, equal and a peer

> of other living beings, and would identify myself simply as "human" in the context of a utopian undivided society (Ektoras, Greek Cypriot, Male).

Ektoras' response follows a pattern identified throughout participants' responses. Cypriot identity is presented as compatible with broader ideological perspectives emphasising inclusivity and tolerance, in this case, humanism and ecologism. This evocation of inclusiveness, as it will become apparent, is not consistent, as different participants place their focus on different aspects of this claimed inclusivity. Nonetheless, the claim itself is repeatedly made when describing Cypriot identity.

For Andreas, another Greek Cypriot in his 20s, Cypriot identity is fundamentally connected with the differentiation of the island from Greece and Turkey:

> I think there is some Cypriot identity attached to the island. In essence, there are multiple Cypriot identities connected to the island, as they are shaped and changed over historical time. The common element of these multiple identities today is that they understand the Cypriot element as something separate and independent. We see this even in the most Greek-centric narratives where the Cypriot element, although included in the wider Hellenism, exists as something "special" and worth mentioning. Therefore, I believe that Cypriot identity is essentially the reproduction of the idea that we are something different from others, specifically Greece and Turkey. So being Cypriot boils down to not feeling (or feeling to a lesser extent) Greek or Turkish (Andreas, Greek Cypriot, Male).

In Andreas' view, Cypriotness is fragmented into a series of local identities, which are nonetheless held together by their commonality in differentiating themselves from Greece and Turkey. Thus, in every expression of Cypriot identity, the partial, or complete rejection of Greekness/Turkishness is central. Nonetheless, differences internal to the island were minimised by Andreas when he was asked to describe himself, as he consciously aimed to include Turkish Cypriots in the category of the 'Cypriot':

> I would describe myself as Cypriot, to the extent that I believe that such a social identity can exist without having to depend on other political-cultural influences (e.g., Greek, and Turkish). At the same time, however, I recognize the fact that the term "Cypriot" has been monopolized by the Greek Cypriots, with the result that many times this category does not include the Turkish Cypriots. Therefore, depending on

> the context of the discussion each time, I sometimes choose to say that I am a Greek Cypriot (instead of a Cypriot), to make clear to my interlocutor my positionality and my privilege (Andreas, Greek Cypriot, Male).

As in the case of Ektoras, local claims of Turkishness and Greekness are assigned the status of an externality, as "political-cultural influences" originating outside of Cyprus. Yet, approached as a term signifying a Cypriot totality, 'Cypriot' is represented as a category that should, in principle, be inclusive of both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. Thus, for Andreas, switching between 'Cypriot' and 'Greek Cypriot' is not reflecting personal attachments to Greekness, as the terms act as contextualised signifiers over expressing this inclusivity, by projecting Greek Cypriots as a particularism, rather than as the universal community of the island.[22]

The rejection of Greek and Turkish national identities is directly reflected in the response of Maria, a Greek Cypriot woman in her 20s, directly challenging fundamental claims of Greek Cypriot nationalism:

> I would describe Cypriotism as an "inclusive" movement, based on accepting all ethnic groups living on the island but mainly about recognizing that Greek [Cypriots] and Turkish Cypriots share a common identity, the Cypriot one. So, in a way, it is a movement that recognizes the similarities between people living in [the] North and those in the South.[23] We are all Cypriots who just speak different languages/dialects, some of us are religious and some are not, some are Christian, some are Muslim, but we are all Cypriots. […] Cypriotists all are pro-reunification and pro-federation. The movement is characterized by its progressivist views and in a way, it stands against what the Cypriot System has represented since its establishment (more strongly recently with the Anastasiades Government) a.k.a. corruption, institutional racism, unsustainability, unwillingness to cooperate with the other side (Maria, Greek Cypriot, Female).

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[22] The extent to which the meaning attached to this shifting of self-description becomes apparent within a social interaction remains contextual. For example, in the context of the Republic of Cyprus and Greece, where the term 'Cypriot' is universally employed to signify exclusively the Greek Cypriot community, describing oneself as 'Greek Cypriot' challenges this signification on a direct, immediate level.

[23] The terms 'north' and 'south' are commonly employed in pro-reunification circles to describe the island's division. For a detailed discussion surrounding the usage of the terms, see Pastellopoulos (2018: 32-39).

Like most responses, Cypriot identity is here again claimed as inclusive, transcending existing divisions and ethnic identifications. As a political position, Cypriotness is presented as an alternative to predominant Greek Cypriot politics, which are assigned a series of negative connotations. Thus, claims to Cypriotness are assigned a broader political meaning as a rejection of the status quo, rather than merely in relation to the ongoing division. This rejection is further extended to broader claims associated with Greek Cypriot nationalism:

> If we were free, if we had peace, if we were united as a nation, I would probably have given a different answer. I would have said "I am human", "I don't care about nationality or ethnicity". But I am fucking angry that since I could use language, they tried to shove in my head what to think and how to feel. I remember the history books of PRIMARY, secondary, and high school, I revisited them when I was a young adult and was shocked. I am fucking angry that my teachers obediently went on to teach us about war at 6 years old, teach us about the monster, the enemy, Turkey, made us pray in class, learn the [Greek national] hymn, and sing patriotic songs that we had no idea what they meant. […] And then they continued… tried to convince me I am Greek, tried to convince me they (the Turkish Cypriots) are Turkish. Tried to convince me that the war is all Turkey's fault because they are thirsty for blood, they are just heartless savages who take children away and turn them into Muslim soldiers. They may have gone to the extent to teach me more about the "enemy" than my own country (Maria, Greek Cypriot, Female).

For Maria, the claiming of a Cypriot identity corresponds to the dismissal of dominant representations of Turkish Cypriots and formal historical narrations. The description of Cypriots as a "divided nation" formulates a representation of a unitary national population, fragmented from the continuation of partition and the predominance of Greek and Turkish nationalist narration, perpetuating conflicting ethnic identities. Maria further articulated her position by directly repudiating Greekness, in relation to the national symbolism permeating the Republic of Cyprus:

> To answer your question, I am not Greek. I am not Greek Cypriot. Why should I be Greek Cypriot and not Cypriot first and then Greek? Why not Cypriot Greek? I do not even like that, but it is a valid point to me, that even with the term Greek Cypriot, Greek goes first and Cypriot follows. The church, government, and the elites are the ones responsible for making people feel like their Cypriotism is not enough. Their

> language is not proper. Their flag cannot stand on its own. A place without its own national anthem. A place without history because what is history if the people don't know it? I hate that the Greek flag is hanging outside every single church in Cyprus. Do not get me wrong, I do not hate any flag, a flag is just a symbol. I hate the fact that it hangs so proudly in a place it should not hang at all. And why? Because everything started from what this flag represents. […] And instead of embracing our Cypriotism to unite the island, we still hang Greek flags proudly for the whole world to see. It is a tragedy. So no, I am not Greek, **I am Cypriot** [emphasis in original]. I embrace the Cypriot flag with its neutral non-political colours and peaceful theme. I embrace the Cypriot dialect. I embrace the Cypriots of the North. I metaphorically shit (think of it in a Performing Arts, Marina Abramovich kind of way) on our history books and the Greek rhetoric. **I oppose** all those things that place us further apart and away from peaceful reunification. **I disagree** with what we have been taught; it is not our religion, language, or "mother land" that defines us as a nation (Maria, Greek Cypriot, Female).

The rejection of Greekness is here direct and absolute, articulated through a claiming of difference vis-à-vis Greek national identity – the Republic's flag, the Cypriot Greek language variety[24] and Turkish Cypriots are reconfigured as elements incompatible with Greekness, the symbols of which are rejected as imposed and alien. However, despite the detail characterising Maria's response, Cypriotness remains an evasive category, with no clear definition or expanded discussion provided. This vagueness surrounding Cypriotness follows a pattern identified in the collected data, where Cypriot identity is largely defined in relation to what it is not, rather than what it is fundamentally claimed to be.

The relationship between Cypriot identity and opposition to Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism was further proposed by Sotiris, a Greek Cypriot man in his 20s, placing Cypriotness in an inherent conflict with these expressions of nationalism:

> I think the conceptual borders between the various cultural identities in general are arbitrary. This understanding is what usually dictates and informs my perception of identities in this context. Having said that, I do believe there is a Cypriot identity that

[24] In the Republic of Cyprus, the spoken vernacular is Cypriot Greek, a language variety with significant differentiation from the various Greek varieties spoken in Greece. Claims surrounding Cypriot Greek are explored in detail in chapter 6.

> arises both as a vague consolidation of customs, regional perceptions, and local traditions but also as a response to the nationalist narratives on both sides that aim to shift the identity towards a Greek or a Turkish one, disregarding the local elements (Sotiris, Greek Cypriot, Male).

A different point of view is here articulated. In contrast to previous perspectives, which retain an element of genuineness to Cypriotness, rejecting in parallel such genuineness for the claims of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism, Sotiris reduces all cultural identities to arbitrariness. While Cypriot identity is described as a generalised assemblage of localised characteristics, the main emphasis for Sotiris rests on its rejection of Greek and Turkish nationalism, as he clarified while discussing his self-description:

> The most accurate description for myself would be first and foremost a Cypriot, but I also find acceptable the descriptions "Greek Cypriot" and "Greek-speaking Cypriot".[25] I would introduce myself as a Cypriot first as a symbolic declaration of my refusal to follow the dominant nationalistic narrative of being Greek first, which is embedded in the dominant nationalist ideology of the island, but also because this label demonstrates the fact that Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots can share the same identity. In other words, since the terminology here lies on arbitrary and vague concepts for me, I choose the one that suits the political message I want to send every time I have to describe myself (Sotiris, Greek Cypriot, Male).

Cypriotness is thus here evoked strategically, signifying the political position taken in relation to reunification and the potential co-existence between the two communities. Cypriot identity is primarily employed for the delegitimization of competing political ideologies, embodying the rejection of positions which formulate national categories that are seen as incompatible with reunification, as well as with the claim that a common identity can exist between the two communities.

In contrast, Alexandra, a Greek Cypriot woman in her 30s, perceived Cypriotness as an alternative to Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism, presenting Cypriot identity as fundamentally different to a national identity:

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[25] The terms 'Greek-speaking Cypriot' and 'Turkish-speaking Cypriot' are occasionally employed in pro-reunification activist circles to describe the two communities, recognising their differences without reducing them to ethnic or national categories.

> Cypriot identity is far from a national identity. It is mainly a cultural identity that concerns the history, traditions, and culture of the world on this island. Cypriot identity is common to the communities because it is about this common experience of growing up in this geographical place, living in a society with specific characteristics that are very common between the communities, adopting the culture of this space, which is a bit of the cultures of the area but more common within the space, to use common words that may not exist in our mother tongues, and even fighting for reunification has become part of this identity, since while it may exist and is adopted to some extent by a large part of the population, claiming it within the hegemony of nationalisms, imposes the allying with the reunification movement. […] I do not feel that I belong to any nation, and I renounce any idea of national identity, but I recognize my cultural identity as Cypriot (Alexandra, Greek Cypriot, Female).

Like other responses, Cypriotness is argued to entail cultural pluralism, while Cypriot identity is again interrelated with the geographical space of the Middle East, reflecting "a bit of the cultures of the area", constraining Cypriotness to a specific abstracted territory. Cypriotness is represented as the opposite of nationalism, the latter always equated with its Greek (Cypriot) and Turkish (Cypriot) variants. Thus, while a series of elements commonly considered as constituents of national identification are evoked, such as common traditions, culture, history, territory and language, Cypriot identity is represented as a concept fundamentally different to that of a national identity.

A similar position was articulated in some detail in a pamphlet circulated in 2016 by the Leftist Movement 'We Want Federation' titled 'Questions and Brief Answers Regarding Subjects Relating to Reunification',[26] aiming to inform its readers of the various aspects pertaining to the potential federal reunification of the island. Under the caption 'Will a Cypriot nation be created after the solution?', the Movement explained that:

> The historical era of ethnogenesis has passed. No such issue is raised; and cannot be raised in terms of creating a new nation in the 21st century. This does not mean that existing national identities are unchanging or immutable. Cypriotness, either as a political consciousness or as an element of cultural identity, is already widespread

[26] The group was formed in 2016 to promote the federal reunification of Cyprus (Anon 2022). It has been primarily active in Nicosia. Material from the group were located both in the Cyprus Movements Archive and at social space Kaymakkin.

> amongst the various communities of the island, and is gaining, over time, ground at the expense of ethnocentric identities, despite the ongoing division. The solution will possibly be a catalyst so that this is reinforced by emphasising the common characteristics of the people of Cyprus, rather than what potentially separates them.
>
> What is of essential importance, however, is not the development and consolidation of a new nation, but of a federal perception of the whole of Cyprus, over and above individual ethno-communal identities. Something that has in other cases been described as a constitutional patriotism or federalism - the political commitment of citizens to defend the general interest of the country and not the special interests of a part of it. We are in favour of an open Cyprus after the solution, which will help overcome closed, conservative, and intolerant perceptions of the nation. In any case, we reject logics of forming "nations", which exclude "others" and construct internal and/or external "enemies" (Leftist Movement ‘We Want Federation’ 2016: 9).

The text entangles several claims and concepts, starting from the initial position that a Cypriot nation can no longer be formed, because it is by now a historical impossibility. Cypriotness is therefore presented not as an alternative form of national imagining, but its very rejection, as an opposite to nationalism. The evocation of constitutional patriotism, a concept originating in postnationalist political theory emphasizing attachment to the constitution and to citizenship over national identification, enriches such a representation (Calhoun 2002: 149-150). Nonetheless, a series of signifiers typically located in nationalist discourses are also included, such as emphasizing the common characteristics of a population, and placing the “general interest of the country” above other competing interests. The support of an “open Cyprus”, overcoming intolerance, conservativism, and othering, reflects the broader representation of Cypriotness as an inclusive identity, found repeatedly in Cypriotist discourse.

A series of initial observations can be identified from the above extracts. We can note that Cypriot identity corresponds to an imagined community on at least a minimal basis, defined in relation to the fixed territory of the island of Cyprus. Constraining the identity spatially, Cypriotist positions place necessarily a limitation to inclusiveness, as the restriction to territory further corresponds to the people residing in; and connected with it. Thus, Cypriotist positions reflect the mode of imagination described by Anderson (2008: 7), in so far as the category of the ‘Cypriot’ is limited, confined to the population, or section thereof, connected

with the island itself. The attachment of an identity to the territory of the island entails further a level of abstraction that does not reflect existing political divisions, as Cyprus, as an abstracted signifier, is here conceptualised as a totality, rather than as a partitioned terrain.

This spatial containment is however further extended in relation to difference – Cypriotness is conceptualised through a direct differentiation with Greece and Turkey, as a geographical and cultural space autonomous from, and independent of, these nation-states. The differentiation with the 'motherlands' reflects broader claims surrounding Cypriot identity, where Cypriotness is consistently presented as being incompatible with Greekness, with Cypriot identity being imagined through a negative relation to Greek (and Turkish) national identity. The evocation, in some responses, of the Middle East and/or the "surrounding people", adds further to this differentiation, as Greece is ideologically constructed as inherently European and Western (Gökay & Hamourtziadou 2016: 183), a claim extended to Cyprus within Greek Cypriot nationalist narratives (Peristianis 2008: 26), while the countries surrounding Cyprus (e.g., Lebanon, Egypt, Turkey, Syria) are typically understood to belong to a non-European geographical and cultural space. Thus, claims that Cypriot identity has a closer cultural affinity with the (national) identities of its neighbouring nation-states, act as signifiers of Cyprus' differentiation with Western Europe and therefore with Greece, as the latter is perceived to be culturally European.

The presentation of Cypriot identity as incompatible with notions of Greekness and Turkishness contradict prior findings, and particularly those of Mavratsas (1997: 721), who argued that Cypriotist positions do not deny local expressions of Greek and Turkish ethnic identities, merely employing Cypriot identity as an umbrella category aiming to subsume ethnic identities under it. [27] In contrast, Cypriotness is here conceived not as a complimentary identity, but as an alternative mode of identification that is in tension with Greek and Turkish ethnic identities themselves. It is further worth reflecting that in contrast to Peristianis' schema equating Cypriotism with an identification with the state (2008: 253), no respondent

[27] Since Mavratsas focused exclusively on the public political discourse of a single organisation from the 1990s, rather than engaging with the private views of individuals, it is not clear if Cypriotist positions have changed historically, or if similar claims were maintained during the same period but were merely not publicly articulated in political discourse. As direct public articulations surrounding Cypriot identity have also been relatively scarce in the collected documents, the latter explanation appears more plausible.

suggested such an identification. Rather, Cypriot identity is argued to correspond to the island itself, instead of the state institutions presently claiming sovereignty over it.[28]

Yet, while Cypriot identity is geographically contained to the island, defined in a negative relation to Greece and Turkey, Cypriotness is at the very same time represented as a culturally inclusive category. On a minimal level, this inclusiveness appears to encompass the two main ethnic communities of Cyprus, contrasting Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalist claims over national identity, which place at the centre of their discourse a culturally homogenised national subject. Inclusiveness is often phrased in relation to culture, with respondents avoiding, in their descriptions, to offer strict limits or definitions of Cypriot identity as a category.

4.2. Cypriotness as Pluralism

The claim of cultural pluralism runs throughout participants' responses, as well as in articles directly commenting on senses of Cypriotness. Cultural pluralism is in turn consistently connected with the rejection of Greek Cypriot nationalism, in parallel to the claiming of a Cypriot identity. The extent of this pluralism varies – nonetheless, the claim that Cypriotness entails inclusivity and cultural heterogeneity is a fundamental aspect of Cypriotist positions surrounding identity. For example, an anonymous text from 2010 titled 'Crossing Checkpoints' published on the blog Epanenosi2011; reflected on inter-communal interaction following the opening of checkpoints, with cultural pluralism presented as an already unfolding process, a developing lived experience:

> 2003 constitutes a pivotal point in Cypriot history. The opening of the checkpoints signified the beginning of a new period where reunification as an aim, gained a social basis and materiality. According to research, the majority of Cypriots crossed to the opposite side, at least once, while there exists a significant minority that crosses the checkpoints relatively often. This group that crosses the checkpoints, even only for consumption reasons […] constitutes, basically, the magic of reunification. Because it comes into contact with the other community, challenges in practice the "borders" and

[28] This observation does not of course contradict the centrality of the state in representing the nation over a specified claimed national territory; but does provide a challenge to schemas arguing that examples of 'civic nationalism' merely entail an identification with civic and political institutions.

> more importantly undermines the dominant logic of partition that perceives Cyprus as two separate pieces. The opening of Ledra Street in 2008[29] consolidated this tendency. A visit at Ledra Street is enough for someone to come to the realization that coexistence is a fact – whether you are in the south or the north, the people are mixed. You realize that Cyprus is bilingual and bi-communal (Anon 2010c).

A representation of Cypriotness is here suggested, which encapsulates the understanding of a holistic, bilingual, and bi-communal Cyprus as an actuality – an unfolding material reality emerging through the ongoing interaction between members of the two ethnic communities, that has only been made possible since the opening of checkpoints. A more common, repeating representation of Cypriotness, however, is one that connects it with cultural pluralism and heterogeneity. In an article from 2001 titled 'In Relation to Memory and Dignity', published in issue 29 of Eks Iparhis, contemporary Cyprus is described through the language of colonial relations, with Greek and Turkish national symbols equated with occupation:

> In general, Nicosia appears to me as a fully occupied city and for this reason I avoid it. Beyond the fact that it is surrounded by military barracks, entering it gives you the feeling of going through an inspection, and the very semiology at its entrance expresses this double occupation. As you approach Nicosia, you see first from the south the giant Greek flag on the GSP Stadium, while, upon entering, you see opposite you the flag of Dektaş' state…[30] (Menikos 2001: 60).

The article continues by outlining two distinct forms of Cypriot identity, one connected with the prospect of reunification, and the other with a broader resistance towards national homogenisation:

> There are two forms of Cypriot consciousness. The first is expressed through the attempts to create an independent state, a reunified society, in essence, a claim for the "right to survive". The other does not have the anxiety of survival, but the passion of dignity. It is a deeper position that refuses to conform, drawing its inspiration and

[29] This refers to the opening of the Ledra/Lockmaci checkpoint in April of 2008, a pedestrian checkpoint located in the centre of the partitioned city of Nicosia.

[30] The text here refers to Rauf Denktaş, then president of the TRNC. He was a pro-partition nationalist Turkish Cypriot politician, who dominated political life in the Turkish Cypriot community from the 1960s until 2004.

> memory from fragments, from the "cunning of the marginalised"…[31] It is the birth of a vacuum: of this peculiar bordering space "between east and west" where power imposes itself to transform the residents into descendants of settlers of 3000 or 500 years old…[32] Dignity, here, therefore means the persistence of the native's memory – but of a cosmopolitan native, since his experience is conditioned by the border, rather than a deeper essence. […] This form of Cypriot consciousness is alive because in our subconscious a little Gallic village exists, resisting Roman civilization (Menikos 2001: 61).

Cyprus is here presented as a space situated in an ambiguous cultural sphere, "between east and west", while the native population is identified with cosmopolitanism, and thus diversity and plurality, being irreducible to the categories of the Greek and Turkish nations, themselves demoted to the level of external powers imposing themselves on the island's residents. The persistence of claims to Cypriotness are thus attributed to the resistance of the island's native population from being subsumed under broader homogenised national categories.[33]

Similarly, in a short article published in 2008 in issue 3 of Kalemi, titled 'Why Kalemi? What Does it Mean to Us', the reasoning behind the magazine's name[34] is explained, offering a description of an alternative perspective over Cyprus:

> [Kalemi is a] word that indicates the osmosis of language and by extension of people and societies, the other face of Cyprus, of interactions, of our meaningful and multi-layered history, of coexistence and symbiosis (Kappas 2008: 2).

Cyprus is again presented as a space of cultural synthesis and plurality, irreducible to the monocultural representation found in Greek Cypriot nationalism. The representation maintains, nonetheless, a vagueness that is characteristic of descriptions of Cypriotness, as

[31] The extract is a direct quote from a speech given by leftist reunification activist Costis Ahniotis, originally published in 1988 in the magazine Entos ton Teihon (Within the Walls) (Ahniotis 1988: 13). The article was subsequently reprinted in issue 11 of the anti-authoritarian magazine Entropia in 2017 (Ahniotis 2017).

[32] The timeframes of "3000 or 500 years old" refer to the historical claims made by Greek Cypriot nationalism and Turkish Cypriot nationalism respectively. The former traces the Greek Cypriot community to the colonisation of the island by ancient Greeks during antiquity, while the latter traces the Turkish Cypriot community to the Ottoman conquest of Cyprus in 1571.

[33] This position is similar to perspectives emerging in the 1980s, originally found in the writings of the first anarchist circles active on the island (Pastellopoulos 2022a: 72).

[34] The magazine's name translates to 'chisel', with the word appearing in both the Greek and Turkish languages.

the precise meaning attached to cultural pluralism is not directly addressed, articulated, or detailed. While Cypriotness is described in multicultural terms, it continues to be defined primarily negatively, implicitly or explicitly described in relation to what it is not claimed to be, rather than what it is argued to entail.

In a more recent example, claims over the content of Cypriot identity are again expressed in an antifascist article titled 'ANTIFA 101', published in 2020 in issue 16 of the anti-authoritarian magazine Entropia. Following a historical discussion of fascism which connects its local expressions with the ideologies of Greek and Turkish nationalism that have dominated Cypriot political life since the early 20th century, the article argues that:

> Antifascist struggle in Cyprus must expand itself beyond the framework of anti-racism, attacking the basis of nationalist narratives in Cyprus. Cypriot antifascism must be identical with the emergence of a Cypriot identity, which will be open and will include Christians, Muslims, Jews, Arabs, atheists, and anyone else willing to identify as a Cypriot. Cypriot antifascism must fight to open checkpoints, for all communities to come together, for the prejudices created by isolation to eclipse (G. A. 2020: 12-13).

The perspective over Cypriot identity is here one of openness, of an identity able to encapsulate religious and cultural multiplicity, eradicating existing divisions and conflictual identifications. Cypriot identity is envisioned as a desired potentiality, rather than an existing reality, a political aim placed in opposition to Greek and Turkish nationalism. The representation of Cypriotness as a potentiality rather than an actuality occasionally appears in the collected data, as Cypriotness is in some instances claimed to already be present and developing, while at others it is presented as a desirable political goal, yet to be properly manifested and entrenched in contemporary Cyprus.

The connection between Cypriotness and cultural pluralism was repeatedly observed in participants' responses, which often noted that Cypriot identity should not be confused with a national identity. For Max, a genderqueer Greek Cypriot in their 30s, Cypriotness is primarily characterised by pluralism:

> [Cypriotness is] all those pieces of cultural heritage that shape the Cypriot identity, distinguishing it from others. It is at the same time its pluralism. In religions, minorities, Armenians, Latins, Maronites. Thus, it is an identity which gives room for

> openings, it can mean many things. And today, where Cyprus has people from many countries, being a Cypriot can also be an identity expressed by a person who has a migratory background. It is not a single, static identity. It has fluidity, openness, and is shaped by the people who identify as Cypriots, with all the influences that have affected this identity throughout time, historically. Whether this was from conquerors, colonialism etc. All those who passed and left their mark and have fermented and influenced what we are today (Max, Greek Cypriot, genderqueer).

Cypriot identity is presented both as distinct and as pluralistic, encapsulating the cultural differentiation existing on the island. It is envisioned as an inclusive category, argued here to potentially include both locals and migrants, having an ever-changing content, being shaped by a multiplicity of historical influences, as well as by the individuals who claim this identity for themselves. Nonetheless, Max emphasised the rejection of the ongoing division as the key reason for personally claiming a Cypriot identity:

> [I describe myself] as a Cypriot, because this is what I feel expresses my identity as a person born in Cyprus, as well as in connection with my vision of a reunified Cyprus. It is how I see myself beyond the distinction of Greek and Turkish Cypriots. And I would like there to be a space for accepting and shaping oneself as a Cypriot. With no further explanation needed. I feel happy about what connects me to my place, the people, the environment, the space, the traditions, the music, the tastes, the memory (Max, Greek Cypriot, genderqueer).

Cypriotness is here employed as a signifier transcending existing ethnic divisions, as a self-description identifiable with the desire for a reunified Cyprus. The category of the ‘Cypriot’, lacking an ethnic prefix, is represented as being void of inter-communal tension, in harmony with the experiences and emotional attachments that Max places on the island. Artemis, a Greek Cypriot woman in her 30s, also connected Cypriot identity to a reunified Cyprus:

> Cypriot identity does not exist on paper, but I believe it exists in the minds of the people around us. Greeks recognize this diversity, I often heard "they are Cypriots" when I was studying in Greece. They make fun of the way we speak, so they recognize it. Cypriot identity for me is not something nationally superior. It doesn't have purity. It does not discriminate against others. Cypriot identity, however, aims for the reunification of the Cypriot communities. And with this reasoning, it remains

> alive amid so many attempts to eliminate it. […] I would not like to narrow its boundaries by setting criteria, but geographically we can say that it includes the entire island, from Akamas to Karpas (Artemis, Greek Cypriot, Female).

Like other descriptions, Cypriot identity is here again presented as 'impure' and inclusive, lacking clear boundaries of exclusion, connected at the same time with the prospect of reunification. This is emphasized by the phrase "from Akamas to Karpas", referring to the Akamas and Karpas peninsulas, each located at a different side of the island. The phrase is often employed in pro-reunification political chants, as a representation of a holistic Cyprus. The hesitance to articulate specific criteria further reflects this claim of inclusivity – while the identity is here restricted to the territory of the island, Artemis avoids placing ethnic, cultural, or other preconditions for claiming Cypriotness as an identity.

For Paris, a man in his 30s with both a Greek Cypriot and a migratory background, Cypriot identity remains in an ongoing process of shaping itself:

> Yes [there is a Cypriot identity], but it seems not to be clear. I'm not sure how to phrase this, because there's a bunch of layers I'm thinking about. On one end, I sometimes think that because the colonial British named the islanders 'Cypriots' first, they named a population that was indeed a blur from a previously Ottoman pluralist empire, before shaping the Christians and Muslims to Greek and Turkish Cypriots. This is one theory. But also, perhaps that Cypriot identity is uncertain because it takes time to a) disidentify from Greek or Turkish nationalisms b) build a pluralist identity that embraces all its history (Paris, Migratory Background, Male).

Two hypotheses within which Cypriotness is perceived as pluralistic are presented here by Paris. The first connects the concept with early British colonialism, a period prior to the emergence of Greek and Turkish national identities, leading to the concept corresponding to a culturally pluralistic society. The second perceives Cypriot identity within an ongoing process of formation, emerging in opposition to Greek and Turkish nationalism, on the one hand, and through the consolidation of a pluralistic identity, on the other. Paris further expressed the view that Cypriot identity has developed, up to the present moment, through the differentiation of the Cypriot population from Greece and Turkey:

> In the domain of nationalism though, I think that to call and identify as Cypriot would mean being an orphan. If we play with this a little more, the natives could be a pair of

> orphan siblings. The reason I say this is because if partition happens, there is somewhat a loss of the other that is also a part of yourself. On one end, I've seen Greek-speaking Cypriots separating themselves from Greeks, the same way Turkish-speaking Cypriots separate themselves from Turks. Either of the two Cypriots so far has, though, defined themselves over the years through this separation, in their own relative way, despite the borders [checkpoints] being closed till 2003 (Paris, Migratory Background, Male).

Cypriot identity is here presented as fragmented, with members of each community defining their Cypriotness in opposition to their corresponding Greek and Turkish national identities, primarily claiming their Cypriotness by differentiating themselves from the national 'motherlands'. The employment of the term "orphan siblings" by Paris precisely indicates this process, as each community produces a sense of Cypriotness for itself; but does not necessarily actively develop a broader conception of Cypriotness. Paris concluded his response by arguing that:

> In meeting together, the differences are felt from the different context each Cypriot was raised in, as if 'Cypriot' was always defined in resistance to something (the motherland). But then, if partition happens, I think it would mean losing a part of yourself. So perhaps, in meeting the other Cypriot, I think there's a case for either being left in the tragedy of fending for yourself an identity, or that it can become a starting point to collaborate and grow as a co-identifying identity. I think if I could imagine an alternative Cyprus, [that would include a] historical education which would invoke all the cultures that passed through the island; and cultivate [the idea] that to be Cypriot is a pluralist inclusion, of all that historical culmination to its present existence (Paris, Migratory Background, Male).

Pluralist inclusion proper is thus delegated as a desirable, future prospect, in which Cypriot identity will no longer be defined primarily through a negative relation with each community's motherland, but through the formation of an identity emerging from inter-communal interaction and collaboration. Phrasing partition as a partial loss of oneself, a supra-communal conception of Cypriot identity is however already here at play – as the usage of the word "tragedy" to describe defining one's identity exclusively through one's ethnic community, additionally indicates. Paris was one of the few participants who did not exclusively self-identity as a Cypriot, stating that he perceived himself as "Cypriot, Filipino,

Spanish, Guatemalan, and probably some Arabic too", adding that "[p]erhaps I can't ever be fully one thing, but I recognize aspects of myself that came to be from all the histories that arrive where I am".

The claim to pluralism contradicts Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalist positions, which place at the centre of their discourse a culturally homogenised national subject. Cypriot identity is in contrast consistently represented as an inherently non-national identity, and Cypriotness as an anti-nationalist mode of identification. This observation reaffirms prior findings found in the literature, which noted that Cypriotists reject the label of 'nationalism' for the description of their own views, perceiving themselves as being anti-nationalists instead (Mavratsas 1997: 723). The meaning attached to the term 'nationalism' in Cypriotist discourse is however not theoretical, but contextual – nationalism is equated with its Greek and Turkish variants, as well as with a policy of discrimination, racism, and intolerance. Opposition to nationalism is therefore understood to entail a rejection of a specific type of politics centring around ethnic identity, typically associated with conservative, right-wing politics, while at the very same moment reaffirming an alternative imagined community attached to the territory of the island.

As opposition to Greek Cypriot nationalism is an underlying aspect of all Cypriotist expressions, Cypriotness is represented as its opposite. This relation becomes more readily apparent when we examine the claims being made in respect to culture. Where Greek Cypriot nationalism makes claims of a homogenised, static, and monolithic cultural identity, Cypriotness is argued to entail heterogeneity, pluralism, inclusiveness, and adaptiveness, elements that make it incompatible with dominant nationalist discourses. Thus, Cypriot identity is represented as an identification standing outside the ideological claims of Greek Cypriot nationalism, taking the appearance of a floating signifier, acquiring meaning through its utilisation for the invalidation of hegemonic forms of nationalism.

These expressions fluctuate between claims of potentiality and actuality, with Cypriotness sometimes projected as a future, desirable possibility, while at other moments argued to permeate existing social reality. Nonetheless, while inclusiveness and pluralism are consistently evoked as integral to Cypriot identity, the meaning mediated through these claims is less consistent, as the extent of this pluralism changes depending on each response, with positions including standard bi-communal visualisations, multi-religious/communal representations, to broader conceptualisations of identity aiming to further include migrant

populations. What remains consistent is the representation of Cypriot identity as inherently non-homogeneous. Yet, unlike Greek (Cypriot) national identity, Cypriotness is vaguely defined, reflecting the broader claim of inclusivity. The lack of strict criteria for inclusion sustains the image of Cypriot identity as non-restrictive, open, and flexible, entailing no fixed markers of inclusivity and exclusivity.

Another point worth noting is the uneasy relation that participants have to the concept of identity itself. Unlike Greek Cypriot nationalists, who maintain a strong sense of national identity, viewing it as an unchanging characteristic, perspectives over Cypriotness maintain a more hesitant view, often noting that identity is flexible, historical, and amendable. While most participants utilised such readings of identity to criticise primarily Greek national identity in Cyprus, the tendency to challenge the very concept of identity itself was, on some occasions, further extended to question Cypriotness as a category as well.

4.3. Questioning the Centrality of Identity

While Cypriotness has been typically represented as an alternative to both Greekness and nationalism in general, a few participants questioned the usefulness of invoking Cypriot identity as an alternative. Thus, in some responses, the very notion of having a generalised identity was challenged as a desirable aspect of contemporary Cyprus. Katerina, a Greek Cypriot woman in her 30s, doubted the positive influence of identities, while in parallel contemplating how claims to a Cypriot identity can be employed in relation to inter-communal reconciliation:

> I have a bit of a problem with the concept of identity, because it sounds like something fixed and unchanging... Something objective and "true"... Which it is not. In the end, each element of identity exists in relation to something else from which I differentiate myself, and this creates practical problems. […] On the other hand, I understand why the promotion of a Cypriot Identity could be an element that promotes reconciliation. In this case, I could name elements that constituted a positive version of "Cypriot Identity"... Well, we are a people who loves the sea and has a sense of pride, and humanity... Or I could focus on material common elements (e.g. that have to do with our common experiences due to the environment and our "land”)... Or on the similarities in the way we pronounce our otherwise different

> languages... Or in our shared historical experiences (e.g. collective uprisings) or traditions (e.g. food). However, I know how fluid and "ideological", as Althusser would say, the idea of "national identity" is, whatever "nation" it may be (Katerina, Greek Cypriot, Female).

The response of Katerina demonstrates how generalisations surrounding Cypriotness can be articulated with relative ease. While viewing the notion of identity with suspicion, Katerina offers several descriptions of what she describes as a “positive version” of Cypriot identity, a conception of Cypriotness that includes both communities, potentially assisting the process of reconciliation. In describing herself as a Cypriot, Katerina focused on the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion embedded in the various identities existing on the island:

> Spontaneously I would say Cypriot... Maybe if they ask me to clarify I would say Cypriot who speaks Cypriot Greek. I certainly wouldn't say Greek, and if I said Greek Cypriot -which sometimes I do- I would feel uncomfortable. It is what I said before, national identities create problems, I would prefer not to predispose someone towards who I am, based on where I am from (meaning also coming from a specific section of a population, a section carrying historically generated characteristics). But if I had to answer, I would not say Greek Cypriot or Greek, because it refers directly and intensely to the differentiation with Turkish Cypriots... A division that, even in the way I present myself, I would like to erase (Katerina, Greek Cypriot, Female).

For Katerina, her self-description acts as a rejection of Cyprus’ existing divisions separating the local population into different ethnic groups. Cypriotness is thus here employed as a signifier of identity that is perceived to lack national characteristics, transcending dominant national categories, in contrast to Greekness, which is understood to be inherently exclusionary towards Turkish Cypriots.

In contrast, Elias, a Greek Cypriot man in his 30s, perceived claims over Cypriot identity as an alternative form of nationalism, while evaluating them more positively than Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism:

> Identities change over time. There were, and still are, multiple Cypriot identities. Some people feel they are closer to Greece, others to Turkey, others to Armenia, others to Britain, others to Russia, while others feel they are inherently Cypriot. Ideally, we shouldn’t need nationalisms to exist together, however I acknowledge that

> Cypriotism, being the civic variant of nationalism, is far more constructive, compared to Greek and Turkish nationalisms. However, we should have in mind that the ethnic composition of the island has changed after Cyprus' admission to the EU; and is currently rapidly changing due to migration. In 2021, I don't believe we can still talk of a Cypriot identity, solely for Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, as a big part of the population now has origins from other countries of the EU, Africa, Russia, and the Middle East (Elias, Greek Cypriot, Male).

Like Katerina, Elias views identities as ever-changing, noting the variation of national identifications found in Cyprus. In contrast to most responses, he identifies claims over Cypriotness as an expression of civic nationalism, which, in contrasting them with Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism, he views more favourably. Nonetheless, by highlighting the ethnic heterogeneity of the island's population, Elias notes how a Cypriot identity focusing on the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities is at present entailing its own exclusionary dynamics. In describing himself as a Cypriot, Elias downplayed the significance of such self-identifications:

> In regard to nationality, I identify myself as a Cypriot. I also identify as a (former?) fan of Omonoia [local football club], someone who lives in Ayios Antonios [neighbourhood of Nicosia], who drives a Mazda Demio and works at a communications company. Overall, I think identities are useful only up to a point, i.e., until they start becoming exclusionary and lead people to conservatism and violence (Elias, Greek Cypriot, Male).

By downplaying national identity to the same level of importance as driving a specific car, supporting a football team, or living in a particular neighbourhood, Elias reaffirms his position that national identification should not reach a level of centrality leading to social exclusion and conflict. Such a direct rejection of Cyprocentric identification was expressed also by another participant, Petros, a Greek Cypriot man in his late 20s, who also downplayed Cypriotness as an identity marker, placing more significance on his regional, urban identity, to drive the point:

> It does not matter to me in any significant degree, I do not define myself in these terms. If I am asked, I will respond by stating that I'm from Cyprus, or that I'm Cypriot, but if someone calls me a Greek Cypriot, I will not argue with them. I mainly

> identify as someone from Strovolos [neighbourhood of Nicosia] (Petros, Greek Cypriot, Male).

Lastly, for Athena, a Greek Cypriot woman in her 30s, a unified Cypriot identity is presently non-existent, its possibility restricted by the ongoing hegemony of Greek and Turkish national identities:

> Cypriot identity is full of cracks and ruptures. It is certain that there is no single Cypriot identity, as it is not possible to have a single state – at present, or the near future. Beginning from the fact that the Greek and Turkish national identities were imposed as the dominant narratives in Cyprus, and until today express all authoritarian and state structures and relations, then it is difficult to support that there is acceptance (common acceptance) of Cypriotness. Nonetheless, I personally believe that it is possible for a Cypriot identity to exist, precisely because it is connected with the island in space and time. It is a formation that has been shaped with all its specific features, through a series of historical experiences that took place in this geographical-political frame. I still believe, however, that the present educational framework, in which we have been brought up and continue to grow up in, makes the diffusion and acceptance of Cypriot identity quite difficult (Athena, Greek Cypriot, Female).

Greek and Turkish national identities are here represented as imposed, in contrast to Cypriot identity, which is argued to be instead connected with the island historically and spatially. Nonetheless, Cypriot identity is reserved here to the position of a potentiality, blocked at present by the predominance and entrenchment of Greek and Turkish national identities in formal state institutions, repressing any widespread affirmation of Cypriotness. Yet, in her own self-description, Athena rejected the term ‘Cypriot’, arguing that its use sidelines contemporary and historical differences between the various Cypriot ethnic communities:

> I object generally to national identities, but tend to use the term Greek Cypriot, because due to my feminist background, I believe that it is important to recognise and talk through differences, without trying to simply eradicate them without any meaningful discussion. In the present historical conjecture, I believe that Cypriot identity over-simplifies and generalises the discontinuities, the displacements,

> inconsistencies, and the complexities of the history of this place (Athena, Greek Cypriot, Female).

Athena further elaborated that her position was rooted in intersectional feminism, which views the multiple identities imposed upon women as "crossroads of relations of power and exploitation". She thus emphasised the need to "articulate discourses surrounding this multiplicity", rather than removing existing differences though the utilisation of categories that turn them invisible in political discourse:

> [I]t is difficult for me, AT THE PRESENT TIME, to accept Cypriot identity, because I would be erasing the historical conjecture through which my privileged position (as a Greek Cypriot) is systematically (re)producing the marginalisation of other identities, and in this particular context, of Turkish Cypriots. Therefore, it is important for me to recognise these differences (that place me in the position of the Greek Cypriot) and name them, historicise them, and place them in specific frameworks, in order to take responsibility of my positionality and therefore continue to fight for a future in which, perhaps, the adjectives placed before the noun 'Cypriot', will no longer be necessary (Athena, Greek Cypriot, Female).

Thus, the objection towards the utilisation of the term 'Cypriot' for Athena's self-description, rests on the perceived need to recognise and address differences of power and privilege, which the existing terminology surrounding identity reflects more readily than the all-encompassing term 'Cypriot'. Much like Cypriot identity, the usage of the term is nonetheless retained for a future in which the currently employed terms will no longer signify such differences, rendering them politically obsolete.

The perspectives outlined in this section constitute a small minority of the views expressed in participants' responses. Nonetheless, their distinctiveness highlights the extent to which the concept of 'Cypriot identity' outlined by most participants remains largely disconnected from other identity markers mediated by processes of racialization, class stratification, gender inequality and heteronormativity. This is not to say that participants were indifferent to these forms of social inequality, as all them actively participated in political groups and public mobilisations addressing and protesting them. Rather, this observation is applicable to the conceptualised category of 'Cypriot identity' itself. As the category depends upon the claiming of a distinct, yet unifying pluralistic identity, identity markers reflecting non-cultural social relations are externalised, becoming imperceptible through the category.

4.4. Concluding Remarks

The absence of a fixed, standardised consistency in the views surrounding Cypriot identity, reflected in the variety of positions presented, should not be perceived as particularly peculiar, if we are to consider that Cypriotist views do not enjoy the hegemony afforded to Greek Cypriot nationalism. Cypriotist positions are not standardized and codified in the fashion characteristic of dominant ideologies, remaining in the field of grassroots politics, entangled in an ideological contestation with a nationalist ideology that remains dominant in most state and private institutions of the Republic of Cyprus. Nonetheless, Cypriotist positions do maintain common ideological elements, all of which contradict fundamental Greek Cypriot nationalist claims. The imagined communities of the Greek and Turkish nations are disputed, with Cypriot identity claimed as an alternative mode of identification that is geographically restricted to the territory of the island. In turn, this identity is often defined negatively, through Cyprus' claimed difference from Greece and Turkey, presented as incompatible with Greek and Turkish national identities.

Cypriot identity is further asserted as non-national, inclusive and culturally heterogenous. Cypriotness itself is left largely undetailed, with its descriptions characterised by vagueness and generalisations, tautologically reproducing the claim of its pluralism and inclusivity, in contrast to the hegemonic nationalist ideologies Cypriotism opposes, which remain rooted in homogenised national categories. The extent to which conceptualisations of Cypriot identity draw upon facets of national imagining is nonetheless consistent and noticeable. While these facets are already reflected in vague evocations to Cypriot traditions, culture and history, they become apparent in the demarcation of Cyprus as fundamentally different from Greece and Turkey on a cultural level, in the increased attention placed on the inclusion of Turkish Cypriots over other communities, and the attachment of 'Cypriot identity' to a specific geographical territory.

The perspectives presented in this chapter offer a portrayal of Cypriotness as it is conceived among individuals participating in the grassroots, extra-parliamentary politics of the Republic. These descriptions appear to consciously maintain the principle of inclusivity as a fundamental ideological claim, with Cypriot identity rarely demarcated through the more familiar schema of 'insider' and 'outsider'. Shifting our attention from perceptions surrounding Cypriotness itself, the next chapter will focus on Cypriotist public political discourse, examining how the category of the 'Cypriot people' is discursively constituted.

Focusing on the ways in which demographic groups located outside of the Greek Cypriot community are represented, the chapter will explore how an alternative imagined community is mediated through the demarcation of inclusions and exclusions to the category.

5. Carving Out the Cypriot People

Drawing on archival data collected from the archive of social space Kaymakkin and from the Cyprus Movements Archive, this chapter explores the discursive constitution of the category of the 'Cypriot people' in Cypriotist political discourse. The documents examined consist of the left-wing political magazines 'Eks Iparxis' (1999-2004) and 'Kalemi' (2008-11), the anti-authoritarian magazine 'Entropia' (2013-20), as well as the articles published online on the pro-reunification 'Epanenosi2011' blog (2009-12). Little research is available on the representations of different demographic groups within Cypriotist political discourse, and the extent to which they reflect processes of inclusion and exclusion. The chapter aims to fill this gap, by providing a first thorough analysis of these representations.

The chapter begins by discussing the complexity surrounding citizenship in Cyprus, noting the bi-communal logic entailed in the codification of citizenship within the 1960 constitution of the Republic of Cyprus, further exploring the ways in which it has been altered and complicated by the Cyprus Dispute. The chapter moves on to discuss the various population groups, beyond the two ethnic communities, presently living on the island, including smaller Cypriot ethnic/cultural communities, the migrant population living in the Republic, and the category of the 'settlers', a term typically employed to describe individuals who have migrated to northern Cyprus after 1974. The discussion concludes with a brief examination of the divergent ideological perceptions surrounding citizenship.

The chapter moves on to examine how a series of population groups located outside of the Greek Cypriot community are represented in Cypriotist political discourse. It specifically explores representations of the Turkish Cypriot community, of the Cypriot Roma, of the migrant population and of the setters, demonstrating how each population group is represented in a differentiated fashion in relation to the category of the 'Cypriot people'. By examining how each distinct group is represented, the chapter demonstrates the ways in which demarcating lines of inclusion and exclusion are articulated, carving out the category.

5.1. Citizenship in the Republic of Cyprus

As Étienne Balibar observed, the congruency of the political with the national unit gives rise to the crystallisation of a conception of the individual as *homo nationalis*, as a citizen corresponding to her particular nation-state, which in turn claims to embody the totality of the nation in its political manifestation (1990: 345). In turn, citizenship status becomes the site of contestation over belonging, demarcating the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion to the national group, as well as to accessing fundamental political and social rights, including the right to vote, work, and access welfare. Thus, this national dimension to the modern conception of citizenship continues to exert tremendous influence on social and political relations – seen from this light, Ernest Gellner's observation that lacking a nationality appears as the "result of some disaster, and it is itself a disaster of a kind" (1983: 6) encapsulates the centrality that nations continue to have in modern society.

In the context of Cyprus, however, the intersection of national identity and citizenship becomes convoluted, with citizenship being internally fragmented, since Cypriot citizens are further assigned either a Greek, or a Turkish ethnic identity, the two identities which are constitutionally entrenched in the Republic of Cyprus (Salem 1992: 119). From the perspective of legal-political categories, therefore, a non-ethnic Cypriot citizen does not exist – as Constantinou has highlighted, "[p]ostcolonial Cypriot identity is quintessentially and inescapably hyphenated; and hyphenated across a fixed Greek-Turkish axis" (2007: 248). This peculiar arrangement originates in the very logic permeating the constitution of the Republic of Cyprus, which formally entrenched the two ethnic communities as legal categories of equitable political status in the decision-making process, across all sectors of the state. Thus, the citizenry of the Republic is officially divided between the members of the Greek and the Turkish constitutional communities, and every citizen, regardless of background, belongs to one of these two categories (Constantinou 2007: 248).[35]

The constitution further allowed for a minimum recognition of population groups with different cultural backgrounds, under the category of the 'religious group'. Yet, to register as a religious group, enough individuals needed to profess a common faith and be citizens of the

[35] The original grouping of people under these categories was founded on cultural, linguistic and religious criteria, while the automatic inclusion of children to the community of their parents is regulated by the constitution. Individuals naturalized as Cypriot citizens are theoretically given the choice to decide under which constitutional community they want to register (Pastellopoulos 2018: 44-45).

Republic at the coming into force of the constitution.[36] While religious groups maintain a certain degree of autonomy due to their recognition by the state, such as electing their own additional representatives in the House of Representatives, they have no tangible political power, as these representatives do not have the right to vote, retaining only the status of observers (Varnava 2010: 213).[37] Despite the presence of other communities that could had been potentially recognised as religious groups, only three received such recognition – the Armenian, Maronite, and Latin (Catholic) communities (Akçali 2007: 59). Following the bi-communal logic permeating the constitution of the Republic, religious groups were in turn obliged to decide under which constitutional community their members were to be registered, with all three registered under the Greek constitutional community, leading to an arrangement where individuals of one ethnic background or ancestry were assigned, internally, the identity of another ethnic group (Pastellopoulos 2018: 45). In addition, as the registering of religious groups presupposed the organised presence of religious faith, individuals located outside the state's bureaucracy appear to have not been considered, as was the case with the local Roma community, which was merely subsumed primarily under the Turkish constitutional community, receiving no recognition, in any formal capacity, as a distinct cultural group (Akçali 2007: 77).

The entanglement of the Cypriot political landscape is however far from exhausted by these legal categories. The collapse of bi-communality in 1964 and the subsequent de-facto partition and ethnic segregation of the island in 1974 have added additional layers of complexity. With the state coming under the control of the Greek Cypriot community in 1964, the principle of bi-communalism was de-facto negated, as the state was transformed from a bi-communal to a mono-communal apparatus, utilising the 'doctrine of necessity', a legal argument enabling the bypassing of constitutional provisions for the purposes of maintaining the survival and functioning of the state (Hadjigeorgiou & Kyriakou 2020: 296). While still legally entrenched in the constitution, the Turkish constitutional community lost its various communal rights, such as electing a vice-president, having guaranteed access to employment in the public sector and maintaining a veto power on the passing of key policies and laws (Heraclides 2011: 120).

[36] Due to these provisions, no new 'religious groups' can be registered, as the category is designed to reflect only the religious and cultural landscape of 1960.

[37] For a discussion of discriminatory practises facing members of the three official religious groups, see Varnava (2010).

These transformations de-facto downgraded the Turkish Cypriot community from the position of a constitutional community equal to its Greek counterpart, to the level of a mere ethnic minority. This development has continued to play a central role in inter-communal negotiations over the potential resolution to the conflict, as the reintroduction of political bi-communality forms part of every proposed plan for the reunification of the island under a federal structure (Loizides 2020: 127). Such a prospect is typically contested and opposed by Greek Cypriot nationalists, whose positions reflect Gellner's observation that for nationalists, the rulers of the political unit should not "belong to a nation other than that of the majority of the ruled" (1983: 1). Thus, the demarcation of insiders and outsiders in relation to Cypriot citizenship is itself part of the ongoing politics of the Cyprus Dispute, as is the desirable or acceptable status of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot citizens in a potential reunified state.

With the de-facto partition of Cyprus in 1974 and the declaration of independence of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) in 1983, the political terrain has been further complicated, permanently fragmenting Cypriot political life under two competing polities, each with its own civic life, constitution, and citizenry. Turkish Cypriots, for example, remain citizens of the Republic of Cyprus, while also being citizens of the non-recognised TRNC.[38] The citizenry of the TRNC, however, is not exclusively composed by Turkish Cypriots, as a significant number of Turkish nationals arriving in Cyprus after 1974 have also become naturalised, maintaining the right to vote and participate in the TRNC's political life (Akçali, 2007: 74). In parallel to these developments, the migrant population has increased significantly on both sides of the divide over the past 50 years, forming a demographic group located outside the citizenry that is culturally, ethnically, and politically heterogeneous. In the Republic of Cyprus, this group is composed by foreign nationals of differentiated status, ranging from European Union citizens and asylum seekers; to non-European documented and undocumented workers (Akçali 2007: 69, Georgiadou 2019: 204), while in the TRNC, it is largely composed by individuals arriving from Turkey following 1974, commonly referred to as 'settlers' (Akçali 2007: 72).

[38] Turkish Cypriots are however largely barred from specific rights afforded to other citizens, and special laws have been passed regulating such limitations. For example, Turkish Cypriots who are permanently residing in the territories not controlled by the Republic of Cyprus, do not have the right to vote for the presidential and parliamentary elections of the Republic (Akçali 2007: 67). In contrast, the few Greek Cypriots still living in those very same territories after 1974, are afforded that right.

Their continuous presence and increasing number remain one of the thorniest aspects surrounding the Cyprus Dispute (Ioannou 2020: 30), as these population flows are illegal under international law (Loizides 2011: 392) and have often been attributed to a broader policy of Turkification aiming to alter the demographic, symbolic and cultural dynamics of the island (Jensehaugen 2014: 61-62). Despite this, the composition of these population flows can be more appropriately compared with immigrant populations, as individuals have primarily migrated out of economic and personal concerns, rather than political or ideological reasons (Loizides 2011: 395). The increasing population of settlers has complicated the Cyprus Dispute, as a second and third generation of migrants grow up on the island, often living in properties formerly occupied by Greek Cypriots (Hatay 2005: 12-13), while it is commonly understood that a significant number will be permitted to remain in a potential federal reunification, both as foreign nationals and as citizens of the reunified state, the exact number remaining open to negotiations.[39]

Each Cypriot ideological perspective relates to these demographic groups and legal categories in different ways. Greek Cypriot nationalist positions, for example, typically reject or downplay the principle of bi-communality, with Turkish Cypriots recognised at best only as an ethnic minority, rather than as an equal political community (Mavratsas 2010: 208). From this perspective, the conception of the nation is attached to the whole territory of the island, while being contained primarily to the Greek Cypriot community, which is in turn envisioned as an integral part of the broader Greek nation (Mavratsas 1997: 728). As will be demonstrated in this chapter, Cypriotist positions differ greatly from this perspective, entailing the recognition of the Turkish Cypriot community as having an equal political stature to its Greek Cypriot counterpart.

In contrast, Turkish Cypriot nationalism rejects reunification, prioritising the international recognition of the TRNC as the nation-state of Turkish Cypriots and claiming the area north of the buffer zone as its territory (Moudouros 2020: 166). While dominant formulations of Turkish Cypriot nationalism systematically presented Turkish Cypriots and Turkish mainlanders as indistinguishable members of the same nation, a shift towards a specifically Turkish Cypriot conception of identity has been taking place in later years, prioritising Turkish Cypriots in relation to the settler population (Loizides 2007: 181-182). In both Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot expressions of nationalism, migrant population groups are

[39] In the proposed Annan Plan of 2004, this number was capped around 40,000 (Ker-Lindsay 2011: 88).

typically located outside of national belonging, demarcated as cultural outsiders in each conceptualisation of the nation.

5.2. Representations of Turkish Cypriots

Rejection of Greek Cypriot nationalism is inherently entangled with perceptions towards, and representation of Turkish Cypriots in political discourse. Alternative representations reflect not merely opposition to hegemonic forms of nationalism, but broader political positions in relation to federal reunification and self-identity (Peristianis 2008: 240). Thus, a heightened recognition of Turkish Cypriots as a community integral of, and belonging to contemporary Cyprus, was repeatedly identified in the collected data. Such positions have often taken the style of critique, expressing their opposition to dominant perceptions that tend to sideline Turkish Cypriots from being recognized as an autonomous cultural and political community, or being accepted as Cypriots of equal stature to Greek Cypriots. For example, in an article titled 'Better Late than Never' published in 2000 in issue 17 of Eks Iparhis, dominant perceptions are directly challenged:

> In the occupied part of our country live human beings. Greek Cypriots who stayed, guarding our beloved land. Our enclaved.[40] We raised our voices for them, condemning the repression, cataclysm, and violation of their human rights to the peoples of the world and to the United Nations. Turkish Cypriots however, also live there. Those were forced to leave their villages. We did not call these people refugees. […] We did not call them enclaved. We never went to the powerful of the earth demanding the rights and liberty of those Cypriots. We equated them with the invaders and turned our backs on them (Pantelides 2000: 23).

The article continues by setting out a series of rhetorical questions surrounding the non-recognition of Turkish Cypriots as a demographic group oppressed by the Turkish military occupation:

> Our justice, our freedom, our human rights. This 'our', always interpreted not as Cypriot, but as Greek Cypriot. For the Turkish Cypriots, only silence. Do the invaders

[40] Following 1974, a small number of Greek Cypriots and Maronite Cypriots remained in the northern part of the island. They were commonly described as 'the enclaved' in formal Greek Cypriot political discourse. Emphasis was however primarily placed on Greek Cypriots, rather than Maronite Cypriots.

> not violate the rights of all Cypriots? […] Why did we close our ears and eyes, all these years, to the oppression of our compatriots? […] Our compatriots live in the occupied area of our country (Pantelides 2000: 23).

The above text highlights the many ways in which Cypriotist discourse stands as an alternative to Greek Cypriot nationalism. The separation and representation of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots as opponents is challenged, with Turkish Cypriots presented not as enemies or antagonists, but as 'compatriots', and thus as fellow citizens. As citizens, the rights of Turkish Cypriots are highlighted, with the absence of formal recognition of their violation protested. More importantly, Turkish Cypriots are represented as a part of the category of the 'Cypriot', while the reduction of Cypriotness to the Greek Cypriot community is directly rejected.

In a 2002 article titled 'Volkan: Taking Over from Natziak' published in issue 30 of Eks Iparhis; commenting on the left-wing, mass anti-Turkish pro-reunification mobilizations that were taking place in northern Cyprus at the time, the marginalization of Turkish Cypriots as genuine members of the Cypriot population is again directly criticized:

> Lost in our prosperity and our consumerism,[41] we have briefly noticed, or haven't noticed at all, what is happening in the occupied territories, not realising that some developments 'beyond the fence' can affect our own lives. The fading of the feeling that Turkish Cypriots are part of the Cypriot people and share the same country as us, is also contributing to this. As a result, despite the loud slogans for liberation and return,[42] it seems that we have, essentially, given the North part of our country, and the Turkish Cypriots, to Turkey and the aims of Mr. Denktaş (T. P. 2002: 5).

Similar themes are here repeated. Turkish Cypriots should be understood as part of a broader 'Cypriot' category and recognized as such, while the absence of such a recognition is here equated with implicit support for partition. Turkish Cypriots are presented as a homogenized

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[41] The text is here referring to the economic boom in the Republic of Cyprus that followed the 1974 war, which has been occasionally described as the 'Cyprus Miracle' (Christodoulou: 1992). In contrast, the economy of the non-recognised TRNC remained less developed during the same period, burdened by an ongoing economic embargo and international isolation (Gorgulu 2014).

[42] The terms 'liberation' and 'return' were systematically employed in Greek Cypriot nationalist discourse surrounding the post-1974 Cyprus Dispute. The first term referred to the expulsion of the Turkish army from the island, while the second was connected to the return of all Greek Cypriot refugees to their former cities and villages.

category, with the mass protest movement identified with the community as a whole, rather than a specific section of it. In relation to these protests, another article from 2003 published in issue 44 of Eks Iparhis, titled 'Until When Will We Leave Turkish Cypriots in their Deathly Loneliness?', commented negatively on the absence of any recognition amongst Greek Cypriots of Turkish Cypriots as an autonomous community, pointing out that following the intensity of the protests, "quite suddenly everything changes, and everyone is 'discovering' the existence of a new human being they insisted on ignoring: the Turkish Cypriots!" (Mitralias 2003: 19), concluding with the statement that:

> Now, specific initiatives must be undertaken, in knowledge that it is not the Turkish Cypriots that owe to us something, but us, that is the Greek, Greek Cypriot and European movement, that owes a lot to them (Mitralias 2003: 21).

We can note again how the Turkish Cypriot community is presented as a totality, in contrast to Greece, Europe and the Greek Cypriots. The reference to the 'movement', that is, the various organizations constituting the political left, precisely implies this homogenization at play – Turkish Cypriots are presented as a monist category, with the protests expressing their universal demands, while the Greek Cypriot community, Greece, and Europe, are represented as internally politically divided, and therefore more complex. Representation of the Turkish Cypriot community is thus here fundamentally simplistic, even while being overwhelmingly positive.

In yet another article from 2003 published in issue 45 of Eks Iparhis, titled 'So, Now What?', potential political developments following the opening of the island's internal checkpoints are discussed, with the neglect of Turkish Cypriots questioned, arguing that reunification presupposes accepting the Turkish Cypriot community on an equal basis:

> The only hope is to force the mechanisms of the government and of the political parties to think seriously, based on the facts. And the only way for this to happen is not to leave Turkish Cypriots to feel that the political act of issuing identity cards of the Republic of Cyprus is their only capability.[43] We must convince them that we

[43] Turkish Cypriots born prior to 1974, as well as their children, are legally recognized as citizens of the Republic of Cyprus. Following the opening of checkpoints, thousands of Turkish Cypriots, having renewed access to the services of the Republic, issued identification documents, providing them with documentation that was internationally recognized. Barriers to acquiring Cypriot citizenship remain for children of Turkish Cypriots also having a mainland Turkish parent (Zeybek 2022).

> respect them, care for them, and want a relationship with them that is much deeper than the relation between subject and object, more than the occasional release of our repressed internationalism. They are partners. And with partners you talk during difficult times, you listen to them, and they listen back, you document mainly the disagreements rather than the agreements and then begin a struggle to find together a solution (Pavlou 2003: 15).

The representation of the Turkish Cypriot community as 'partners', rather than as opponents within the Cyprus Dispute, is indicative of the broader representation of Turkish Cypriots as fellow Cypriot citizens on an equal, rather than a marginalized basis. This representation often takes a symbolic form. For example, issue 44 of Eks Iparhis, published in 2003 and being the first issue covering the opening of the checkpoints, printed on its cover the only bi-communal poster[44] known to have been created up to that point since 1974, rendering the word 'freedom' in both Turkish and Greek. Within the issue, an article titled 'Welcome Brothers!' encapsulated the general feeling of euphoria amongst pro-reunification circles; which surrounded the lifting of restrictions in movement:

> It is enough for us that the dark myth of hostility and hate between the Greeks and Turks of Cyprus has collapsed. The permanent collapsing of the wall of occupation and division unites us[.] [….] The "common interest" unites and drives us, that is, the creation of a unitary Cyprus, of freedom, of human rights, of demilitarization and of the removal of occupying military forces and of the English bases.[45] The common European future of social struggles unites us. Our demand is for Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots to live free in the reunified, democratic, European Cyprus.[46] The river does not turn back. Welcome, brothers! (Korfiatis 2003: 15).

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[44] The poster was originally designed in 1989, as a collaboration between the Cypriot left-wing magazines Entos ton Teihon (Within the Walls) and Özgürlük (Freedom). It was publicly posted in northern Cyprus, leading to heavy criticism and arrests. It was never posted in the territory under the control of the Republic (Anon 1990: 41).

[45] Refers to the sovereign base areas of Akrotiri and Dhekelia, which have remained part of the United Kingdom following the island's independence, under the legal category of 'British Overseas Territories'.

[46] The term 'European Cyprus', often found in the discourse of the early 2000s, referred to the accession of the Republic of Cyprus to the European Union, which eventually took place in May of 2004. The UN-proposed Annan Plan had, as one of its aims, the reunification of Cyprus prior to EU accession, with parallel referendums taking place on the 24th April in 2004. Following the Republic's accession without the island's reunification, references to a European Cyprus began to fade.

The text, written in Greek and read primarily by Greek Cypriots, highlights the commonality between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, described as 'brothers' embracing again following their separation. Past inter-communal conflict is designated to the category of a 'myth', while unity and the prospect of reunification dominates the narrative. Terms highlighting commonality and mutual respect between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots are regularly employed, as they are again in the extracts presented below from an article published in 2009 in issue 10 of Kalemi, titled 'Bi-communal Walks in Our History', which concludes by referring to Turkish Cypriots as compatriots:

> If we envision a common future with Turkish Cypriots, communication and cooperation with them is an imperative necessity, not merely because it will entrench peace on the level of the average person, but also because it will be a heavy blow against those aiming for the partition of Cyprus. If we believe that the people themselves can play a role in political developments affecting their survival, let us begin the struggle from education. So that our students can learn their History, be proud for their identity like every other person in the world, but at the same time comprehend that to end partition and the total Turkification of the occupied territories, we must struggle alongside our Turkish Cypriot compatriots […] (Mavrada 2009a: 3).

The emphasis on accepting Turkish Cypriots as an equal, autonomous community, is often framed within the prospect of the island's reunification. In another article titled 'What do Turkish Cypriots Really Want?', published in 2003 in issue 45 of Eks Iparhis, the article aims to offer to its Greek Cypriot readership a general understanding of the Turkish Cypriot community, with the presence of Turkish Cypriots as a collective political subject with its own particularities and sensibilities being emphasised:

> Regardless of the various differences existing between different social and political groups, Turkish Cypriots act and behave with all the characteristics of an autonomous society, like us. A general stance is that they exist and operate autonomously and expect from us to have the sensitivity to accept them as such, or at least to not demote them to the level of a minority (Rousos 2003a: 11).

The recognition of Turkish Cypriots as equal citizens, both on an individual and a collective level, is highlighted in relation to the desirable future political arrangements expected to materialize through the reunification of Cyprus in a bi-communal federation. The principle of federalism, which in the context of Cyprus presupposes an equitable participation of each

community to the decision-making process, is here raised as the desirable principle for resolving potential limitations and tensions originating in discrimination against Turkish Cypriots:

> Assuming that we truly want a federation in Cyprus and that this federation will be created with Turkish Cypriots and not some imaginary people that have the characteristics and aims that fit us, we must accept that the sensitivities and orientation of Turkish Cypriots will play an important role (just like, in reverse, will our own sensitivities). […] As a Left we must import within society the logic of accepting political resolutions. Where there are rules and their enforcement do not solve specific problems, or act in a derogatory way towards Turkish Cypriots, we should find solutions with reference to the federal mode of governance. Let's make a step forward, a step towards the future. Future means coexistence; means equal acceptance of Turkish Cypriots as individuals and as a community (Rousos 2003a: 12).

Concern over indifference towards Turkish Cypriots is also highlighted in Cypriotist discourse. In an anonymous 2010 text commenting on Turkish Cypriot elections, titled 'Turkish Cypriot Elections: Who are These People in the End?', published on the Epanenosi2011 blog, the seeming absence of knowledge of the Turkish Cypriot community by Greek Cypriots is raised as a fundamental limitation for reunification:

> You read Sia's or Kızılyürek's book. You take a glimpse at Sener Levent's column and once a week you read Kavazoğlu. The TV show 'Biz/Emis', or the new show 'Ala Fisi kai Thesi' are decent, but they cannot escape from "human stories" or the presentation of traditional professions or songs. The point is that at present, we don't know how this society works and how it thinks. We have no idea. And the worst: we do not care!!! […] We want to create a state with a community we don't know (Anon 2010a).

The implication, also emphasized in the following extract from the text titled 'The Others…and Us', published also in 2010 on the Epanenosi2011 blog, is that the eradication of Turkish Cypriots as an internal Other for Greek Cypriot society, that is, as a community perceived as external to the island, is detrimental for any reunification process to succeed:

> Even though since childhood we grow up forming a very detailed image of our national "other", developing static stereotypes, approaches, and behaviours towards that national "other", what we objectively know of that other is in reality minimal. […] While someone could argue that the physical separation was the key obstacle to interacting with the Others, even though checkpoints opened, existing within the same space has not led the two Others to interaction and inter-mutual exploration. However, before reunification, peaceful coexistence, tolerance and even the integration of the other community within our identity, isn't it necessary for the other community (our national "other") to stop being foreign to us? (Anon 2010b).

These positions are not merely limited to self-reflective articles; but have also been raised within the context of political disputes surrounding policy. In an article from 2008 titled 'Why Should I Teach Turkish Cypriot Writers?', published in issue 2 of Kalemi, the absence of recognition of Turkish Cypriots is raised in relation to the refusal of some public-school teachers to engage with and teach Turkish Cypriot literary works in the classroom, as part of a shift in educational policy aiming to promote reconciliation:

> If even to the sound of the word 'reconciliation' some co-teachers react negatively, what would the very enforcement of this idea cause to them? If today some of us are protesting merely for the mentioning of the word 'reconciliation', how can we turn it tomorrow into a reality? If we ever find a solution, how ready are we to accept Turkish Cypriots and cooperate with them? Within our heart and mind, how ready are we for cooperation, mutual understanding, acceptance, mutual respect, and solidarity? When teachers refuse to familiarize themselves and get to know the cultural expressions of the Turkish Cypriot community, how could they transfer and communicate to our students; contemporary cross-cultural approaches, such as cross-cultural respect, equality between civilizations and the availability of equal opportunities? (Charalambous 2008: 7).

Similarly, in another critical article from 2010, titled '"Exclusively" Cypriots', published in issue 11 of Kalemi, the marginalisation of Turkish Cypriots is discussed within the context of an ongoing political dispute. The article addressed the negative commentary which was circulated by Greek Cypriot media and Greek Cypriot teachers' unions, following the election of a Turkish Cypriot teacher as the Cypriot representative to the European Trade Union Committee for Education:

> It appears that many actors in the Greek Cypriot side want exclusively for themselves the word 'Cypriot', and do not recognize such a capacity for Turkish Cypriots. Instead of supporting cooperation with Turkish Cypriots, and the common representation of Cyprus, even on a circular level, what is attempted is their marginalization. […] All of this is happening simply because some of those individuals who have a public influence and form the journalistic, political, and educational sphere, have adopted the opinion of Denktaş, that in Cyprus two people exist, "us" and the Turkish Cypriots, with whom the Greek Cypriots should have no relations, as they are merely the puppets of Ankara (Kafantaris 2010: 17).

Excluding Turkish Cypriots from the category of the 'Cypriot' is further argued to be integral to official historical narratives taught in public-school education. In an article from 2010 scrutinizing the representations of each community in Greek Cypriot classrooms, titled 'The Teaching of History in the Greek Cypriot Society of Cyprus', published in issue 13 of Kalemi, Cypriotness is demonstrated as being equated with Greek Cypriots, attaching to Turkish Cypriots negativity, lower significance, and lesser historical attachment:

> Through a simple evaluation of the curriculum and the teaching material for 'history' in Greek Cypriot schools, one understands that they consist of a 'history of Greece' and secondarily of a 'history of Cyprus', which is, after all, perceived as an extension of Greece. […] [T]he basic schema still employed, even today, in Greek Cypriot schools, indicates its basic political extensions – that is, the equating of the term "Greek" with the term "Cypriot", and thus the exclusion of Turkish Cypriots from Cypriotness, either through the refusal of recognizing their ethnic identity (they are treated as Greeks in need of assimilation) or through their stereotypical representation and their demonization as national Others, that is, as "Turks". [T]urkish Cypriots are perceived as a minority with weaker historical and political rights in relation to the present and the future, comparatively with Greek Cypriots, who are then unwilling to support or accept any agreement in which power is shared within a future federal framework (Ioannou 2010b: 11-12).

Such objections can however manifest themselves as active reaffirmations of inclusivity, directly attacking Greek Cypriot nationalist perceptions. In a more personal article describing the experiences of the author with her two Turkish Cypriot friends, published in issue 16 of

Kalemi in 2011 and titled ‘Our Friend, Sabrin’, their Cypriotness is stressed in opposition to Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism:

> Both born from this land. Genuine Cypriots. And let those who do not love Peace talk, those who complain and find pleasure in building walls, dividing people, dividing the sun and the sea in two. […] Who was it that armed our hands, and we turned on each other? This I want to know very much. Foreign interventions, together with a bunch of our own Cypriots, Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, led the poison of Nationalism to outpour and reach the soul (Kolokotroni 2011: 27).

Greek Cypriot Cypriotist representations of Turkish Cypriots can thus be argued to exhibit a series of repeated characteristics. Firstly, these representations affirm that the category of the ‘Cypriot’ includes unquestionably Turkish Cypriots. Perspectives which reduce the category to the Greek Cypriot community, a position connected with Greek Cypriot nationalist ideology claiming the island as an inherently Hellenic national, historical, ethnic, and cultural territory, are therefore directly opposed. The categories of ‘Cypriot’ and ‘Cypriotness’ are therefore represented as ontologically larger than any existing ethnic community on the island, and mono-communal representations of Cyprus are rejected. This extension of inclusion is further accompanied by the claim and representation of inter-communal equality. Turkish Cypriots are perceived as equal members of Cypriot society and claimed as such, both within the existing status quo, as well as within a potential reunified federal Cyprus. As Cypriots, they are presented as ‘compatriots’, as fellow citizens whose status and rights should be recognized and respected.

This equality is not limited, however, to the level of the individual. While discrimination against individual Turkish Cypriots is identified, opposed, and called out, representations and claims of equality are further extended to the collective level, with the community represented as a collective subject, with its own concerns, grievances, and sensitivities, which need to be respected, understood, and addressed, within a framework necessitating compromise and resolutions between ‘partners’. Thus, representations of Turkish Cypriots challenge the notion of the community as a minority, reaffirming it instead as an autonomous political community understood to be equal to Greek Cypriots as a collectivity. A bi-communal schema is here at play, with representations of the Turkish Cypriot community directly reflecting bi-communal political structures, within which each community is collectively entrenched as a political subject of equal political stature.

5.3. The Cypriot Roma

The distinctness characterizing the representations of the Turkish Cypriot community becomes more clearly apparent, when we begin to examine representations of other demographic groups. A notable example relates to the Cypriot Roma, and the political dispute which emerged over the government's handling of the Cypriot Roma population in the early 2000s. In 2001, a few hundred Cypriot Roma began crossing the buffer zone, entering the territory controlled by the Republic of Cyprus, in a period when crossing was still banned for the general population. Their arrival was met with institutional discrimination, racism, and a wider moral panic, as the mass media began to label them both as troublemakers and potential Turkish spies, stereotypes that were further echoed within the broader political discourse (Trimikliniotis & Demetriou 2009). In contrast to the general atmosphere, writings in Cypriotist magazines presented a sympathetic position, opposing the policy instigated by the state towards the Roma. These writings criticized government policy in legalistic terms, highlighting the unequal treatment of Cypriot citizens and the potential violation of fundamental constitutional rights emerging from the approach taken by the state. This mode of critique is directly evident in an article published in issue 23 of Eks Iparhis in 2001 titled 'The Gypsies':[47]

> The proof of having Cypriot nationality by the people who are moving from the occupied to the free territories, is being presented as the prerequisite for their acceptance. This proof is presented as the perfect balance between legality, democracy, and humanity, on the one hand, and state security, on the other. Who are those who will decide if the nationality has been proven? What will the proceedings of this process be? Which court system will apply? […] The devotees of "proof" will not be able to answer. Such a process of proof has no origin in law. It is an arbitrariness of the mind. It will lead to results that are in opposition to fundamental constitutional and other legal principles that integrate humanitarian and timeless values (Georgiadis 2001: 6).

The official treatment towards the Roma is criticized on an institutional level, highlighting the absence of any legal framework supporting the policies formally employed by the

[47] The word used in the text is 'Tsiganoi', which is the Greek word usually used to describe the Roma and is equivalent to the word 'Gypsies'. Although the term carries negative connotations, it was not intended to be used as a racial slur in the original context of the text.

government. The article continued by outlining relevant fundamental constitutional rights offered to the citizens of the Republic, arguing that:

> Entering the territory of the Republic without its permission is an illegal act. When we demand proof of nationality, what we are in fact asking from these people is to prove that they are innocent. The descent of the Gypsies should be approached like all the acts and omissions of all individuals who live in the Republic, indiscriminately. If there is any testimony (and not fantasies) of committing an illegal act, they should be prosecuted in accordance with the laws we have enacted. If there is no such testimony, we must leave them alone and support them (Georgiadis 2001: 6).

By placing the legal obligations of the state in the centre of its discourse, the article aimed to expose the discriminatory policies characterizing the Republic's approach towards a section of its citizenship. The demand raised here is one of enforcing the legal principle of formal equality, ensuring that all citizens of the state receive equal treatment and support, regardless of their ethnic or cultural background. All texts published in Eks Iparhis during the period raised similar criticisms against the government, emphasizing the citizenship status of the Cypriot Roma.

Nonetheless, an alternative critique was also articulated, focusing on the broader structural discrimination facing the Roma since the formation of the Republic of Cyprus. Although such a position was not found in the collected documents originating in the period, a reprint of a 2001 article arguing from such a perspective was located in issue 2 of the anti-authoritarian magazine Entropia, published in 2013. The article, titled 'Stories of Greco-Turkish Madness: The Kilintziroi', argued that:

> With independence, the Kilintziroi[48] are not formally recognized as a community, as it had occurred with Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, Maronites, Latins and Armenians, and were thus assumed to be members of the Turkish Cypriot community. The truth is, however, that as a community with a nomadic background, they never identified completely with any other ethnic group in Cyprus. They continued, and continue until today, to speak their own language and to have their own codes of social behavior (that are often unintelligible to the rest of us). […] These days, more and more Kilintziroi pass through the green line with their families, from the occupied

[48] 'Kilintziroi' is the local Cypriot Greek word used to describe the Roma. While employed here merely as a descriptive term, the word has also acquired negative connotations in everyday speech.

> territories to the territory controlled by the Republic of Cyprus. The Mass Media, with their insecurities against their dialect, gave them a new name: Athigganoi. This name fits better to the social fantasy that sees them as second-class human beings. A fantasy shared equally between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots (Florides 2013: 3-4).

The precarious situation of the Roma is identified with structural discrimination originating in both the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities, traceable to the formation of the Republic in 1960, which did not provide them with formalized communal autonomy. After noting some of the cultural elements which distinguish the Roma from the other ethnic communities of the island, the article continues by noting that:

> Greek Cypriots say that the only thing they [the Roma] want is to exploit the benefits provided to them by the Republic of Cyprus – since they remain, legally, citizens of this state, and are entitled to housing and benefits. It is worth wondering why it is considered so suspicious for someone to want access to housing and social support, to survive, especially since s/he is a citizen of the state. […] "Athigganoi" are thus a nightmare for the authorities. A nightmare that fully originates from a deeply engrained racism that reveals the schizophrenia of modern Cypriot reality: On one side, our course towards the European Union, which wants us to be tolerant to minorities, we are even talking about a future multicultural society where tolerance will be the basis upon which a federal polity will be built, and on the other, we cannot even tolerate among us, a few hundred "Athigganous" (Florides 2013: 3-4).

The discrimination faced by the Roma is thus argued to reflect broader discriminatory structures of Greek Cypriot society, itself argued to be split between two contrasting visions. One the one side, a potential society characterized by multiculturalism, tolerance, and federal reunification, and on the other, existing cultural intolerance, structural discrimination and racism. The discrimination faced by the Roma is thus taken up as a reflection of broader discriminatory structures, which should be criticized, opposed, and transcended.

Representations of the Cypriot Roma constitute an interesting example in relation to the distinction between insider and outsider. Unlike the discriminatory rhetoric permeating the early 2000s, their citizenship status is never questioned, but is instead reinforced and highlighted in the critiques formulated against the Republic. Beyond their citizenship status, the Roma population itself, however, is not openly recognized as an integral part of a 'Cypriot people'. As we observed in the previous subchapter, which explored the

representation of Turkish Cypriots in Greek Cypriot Cypriotist discourse, such subtle exclusions are not characteristic of every demographic group, as Turkish Cypriots are, in contrast, represented as an integral part to such a category.

5.4. Representations of the Migrant Population

The opposition to racial, ethnic and cultural discrimination is further demonstrated in the representations surrounding the migrant population. More commonly, opposition to discrimination focuses on the xenophobia experienced by foreign nationals, who, not being citizens of the state, face structural challenges as well as damaging stereotypes. For example, an article published in issue 12 of Kalemi in 2010, titled 'Phaneromeni Neighbourhood', paid attention to discrimination surrounding the Phaneromeni elementary school in Nicosia, a school attended mostly by a new generation of children with a migratory background:

> Cypriots do not send their children here because there are children from other countries, and they fear that the standard is low. Even immigrants who have become financially comfortable prefer to take their children to other schools. One of the most historic schools in Nicosia is in danger of being closed, due to some fears that are being created. Our xenophobia as a people is something that is not justified if we think that a few years ago we were the ones who were emigrating abroad and the treatment we had was completely different from that. Our age is the age of multiculturalism. In the school of Phaneromeni one can see the society of our time in miniature. Children without discrimination form friendships regardless of their origin or religion.
>
> The example of the children should become a life lesson for us. In an experiment we did at school, the children learned that the DNA of people is the same and they are not different in any way, all this brings them closer. Children also know that each culture has something special and important to offer us and improve us as a people and as individuals. Do we know this? We have learned to admire the people who have money and power, but civilization does not mean power but substance (Zoitsas 2010: 8).

The above text is characteristic of the general discourse surrounding racism and ethnic discrimination, as it is reflected in the collected documents. Discrimination based on race,

ethnicity, religion, or any other cultural background is presented as unjustifiable, backward, and unacceptable. A particular vision of multiculturalism is presented as the desirable alternative, stressing cultural tolerance and respect, as well as the common humanity between migrant and native populations.

The demand for multiculturalism is occasionally employed in critiques of government policy, often in relation to structural racism and/or the persistency of Greek Cypriot nationalism within governmental institutions. In a speech critical of public education reprinted in issue 12 of Kalemi in 2011, titled 'Nationalism in Greek Cypriot Education', Greek Cypriot education is traced back to the crystallization of separate school systems for each ethnic community, entrenching an unchanging mode of education that is seldom adapted to social changes. Within this context, the text criticizes the governmental approach to multiculturalism, arguing that despite the occasional positive rhetoric surrounding the term, no concrete policy is ever employed for its promotion:

> A typical example is multiculturalism, which appeared in Greek Cypriot schools as a proud and joyful banner (the pride of our Europeanness) while in our schools there were still very few immigrant students, who did not threaten the logic of national purity. When the immigrants increased, multiculturalism became the project and chatterbox of any ultra-conservative assistant principal doing her masters at the Open University to become a superintendent. And when after 2003 it became a matter of combining multiculturalism with an approaching of the Turkish Cypriot community, nationalists started to balance multiculturalism with hard monocultural elements in schools. What is happening today was the logical development: Risk of solving the Cyprus problem plus more immigrants in schools, equals open nationalist and racist gatherings and actions in schools. Thus, what in European countries is the slogan of fringe fascist parties (such as "France for the French"), in Cyprus was and is the heart of the educational system (Pavlou 2011: 3).

Multiculturalism is thus represented as standing in contradiction with governmental policies, reflected in this case in public education, while cultural tolerance is understood as a potential challenge to hegemonic nationalism. The relationship between the hegemony of Greek Cypriot nationalism on the one hand, and the persistence of racism, discrimination, and intolerance, on the other, is occasionally highlighted, with multiculturalism presented as one of the potential outcomes of the island's reunification, a future political event presented as a

pivotal defeat to Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism. For example, in a left-wing article from 2010 published in the January-February special issue of Kalemi, titled 'The Social Benefits of Reunification', the perceived benefits arising from reunification are outlined, arguing that:

> The reunification of the economy will raise the issue of joint trade union activity through common concerns, coordinated strategy and a policy of demands. The reunification of the Cypriot working class (which was separated historically on an ethnic basis much later than the bourgeoisie) has value in-itself, as the conditions will be created for a labour front against capital, throughout the Cypriot territory. More importantly, however, bi-communal cooperation between Cypriot workers will also cultivate the culture of multicultural tolerance and cooperation with migrant workers (Ioannou 2010a: 7).

Thus, the reunification of Cyprus and the eradication of discrimination against the migrant population is here intrinsically connected, as future inter-communal cooperation is argued to pave the way for the potential entrenchment of tolerance and multiculturalism within the broader Cypriot working class. In contrast, the continuation of de-facto partition is assumed to perpetuate the intolerance and discrimination towards the migrant population residing on the island, reproducing the ethnic divisions currently in place.

Opposition to racism and discrimination is thus further connected with the rejection of Greek Cypriot nationalist claims over national and ethnic homogeneity. For example, in the pro-reunification 2016 pamphlet of the Leftist Movement 'We Want Federation', titled 'Questions and Brief Answers Regarding Subjects Relating to Reunification', the Movement, in opposition to pro-partitionist perspectives arguing against federal reunification on the grounds of national 'purity', argued that:

> It is an illusion that partition protects in the long or medium term the Greekness of the areas under the control of the Republic of Cyprus. The Republic is a member state of the EU and Turkish Cypriots remain its citizens, who at any time may decide, if they wish, to reside in the territories it controls. Furthermore, without a solution to the Cyprus problem, the border between northern Cyprus and Turkey remains open and outside the control of the Republic. Regardless of how partition is regulated, the only thing that is certain is that it cannot take the form of an insurmountable wall, as some imagine. Cyprus, a member of the EU, in conditions of globalization, cannot be

> "plastered" as a cultural and/or national space with consolidated national and other characteristics. After all, Cyprus was never exclusively "Greek", either before or after 1974. On the contrary, it has always been the homeland of people with different origins who live, work, and sometimes are naturalized as citizens (Leftist Movement 'We Want Federation' 2016: 10).

Thus, claims towards a homogeneous cultural or national space are argued to be not merely undesirable, but also unachievable, contradicting the increasingly multicultural reality that is argued to be an inseparable aspect of modern (Cypriot) society. The text moves on to criticize nationalist positions founded upon notions of 'purity', concluding with a statement of support towards cultural/ethnic coexistence and tolerance:

> A return to a regime of closed checkpoints is not possible: people will continue to move back and forth across the line, bringing with them their particular cultural and other characteristics, creating new relationships and potentially new cultures. The ethnic and racial "purity" of a place refers to intolerant regimes and ideologies that have failed miserably, dragging peoples into conflicts and disasters. Greekness, as a cultural element and as a national identity of people in Cyprus, has more potential for survival, development, and perspective, in conditions of peace and harmonious coexistence between the communities, than in conditions of isolation and hostility with the Turkish and Islamic elements of the Eastern Mediterranean, which may arise as a consequence of the perpetuation of the divide (Leftist Movement 'We Want Federation' 2016: 10).

It is worth remembering that the above text aims to convince skeptical readers over the necessity and desirability of a federal reunification of Cyprus. Thus, Greekness is here recognized, but is nonetheless demoted to yet another 'cultural element' of a multicultural society, whose chances of survival in the long-term are argued to be achievable through inter-communal collaboration and cultural tolerance, rather than in attempting to entrench itself as the universal, dominant (ethnic) identity. Nonetheless, this is argued both in relation to the island's reunification and the continuation of its partition, as the rejection of ethnic and racial discrimination is connected with a rejection of Greek Cypriot nationalist ideology itself.

Opposition to racial, ethnic, cultural, and religious discrimination is thus integral to Cypriotist discourses, which systematically embrace anti-racism as a political stance, promoting multiculturalism and inter-communal tolerance in their criticism of structural and other forms

of discrimination. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that in the representations of migrants and of the Cypriot Roma, the distinction between insider and outsider is neither actively challenged not transcended. What is instead challenged are the negative connotations associated with the aforementioned demographic groups, as well as the active discrimination which they regularly face – the meanings attached to the distinction itself are criticized, opposed to, and refuted. Yet, with the distinction itself remaining firmly in place, migrant populations are not claimed to belong to a broader conception of a 'Cypriot people', remaining, in their representation, as outsiders in relation to the category.

5.5. The 'Settlers'

Exploring the representation of settlers presupposes an initial examination of the category of 'settlers' itself, as the category is employed in Greek Cypriot discourses to group together people belonging to a diverse array of ethnic, economic, and cultural backgrounds (Ioannou 2020: 30, Rakopoulos 2022: 23). There is also little consistency to which population groups the term in fact corresponds, as it is often employed to include groups ranging from the first generation of Turkish settlers to irregular migrant workers and foreign university students (Akçali 2007: 71). Precisely because of this, the category is not employed in public discourse as a merely legal and descriptive category; but entails from its very beginning a process of othering, negating the actual composition of the settler population from the discourse. Yet, what is often described as the settler population has too often included Anatolian Turks, Kurds, Laz speakers and Arabic speakers, while there has been a significant increase in an international student population, primarily from Africa (Loizides 2011: 393).

Socially, the population includes military personnel, low-skilled laborers, public sector employees and seasonal workers, who are further differentiated in relation to their timing of arrival and integration in Turkish Cypriot society (Akçali 2007: 71). Additional political distinctions also exist, as some settlers have acquired citizenship of the non-recognised TRNC, while others have not, remaining, in the eyes of the local administration, foreign nationals (Loizides 2011: 393). This internal heterogeneity is promptly eliminated through the very use of the 'settler' category, producing an essentialised representation of the population that does not correspond to actual ethnic, legal, or social relations internal to Turkish Cypriot society, with settlers assumed, within dominant Greek Cypriot political discourse, to be primarily mainland ethnic Turks (Ioannou 2020: 30).

Representations of settlers located in the collected data have been overwhelmingly negative. Settlers are often presented as an existential threat to the survival of the Turkish Cypriot community, as a foreign demographic group whose existence presents a direct danger to the local population. This is subtly suggested, for example, in an article from 2011 published in issue 16 of Kalemi, titled 'Support Towards Turkish Cypriots', which stated that:

> We see in this struggle the refusal of Turkish Cypriots to be subjugated to authoritarian behaviour originating in Ankara, the refusal to bow down to authoritarian decisions for the resolution of everyday problems, taken without even asking those immediately affected, we see the suspenseful cry of Turkish Cypriots in front of the possibility of their community ceasing to exist as an autonomous historical, cultural entity (Pericleous 2011: 8).

While settlers are not here directly mentioned, their presence as a danger is implied, since discourses surrounding the eradication of the Turkish Cypriot community directly link such a development to demographic changes originating in post-1974 population flows. The Turkish Cypriot community, represented here again as a homogenised collectivity, is argued to face, within the current status quo, the possibility of its own extinction. Subtle references to the settler population appear in other texts, as is, for example, the following extract from a 2010 announcement calling for a bi-communal pro-reunification protest in Nicosia, located in the blog Epanenosi2011:

> There could be no agreement and after a deadlock, the Taiwanization of northern Cyprus could begin, with the continuation of demographic alteration (Citizen Initiative of Limassol 'Solution-Reunification-Peace' 2010).

The changes in the demography of northern Cyprus are presented as a fundamental problem emanating from the continuation of de-facto partition, with reunification implied to entail the possibility of its stoppage and potential reversal. Articles directly addressing settlers as a threat to the Turkish Cypriot community are also present in the collected data, indicating the positioning of Turkish Cypriots and settlers in relation to belonging, within Cypriotist discourse. In a pro-reunification article titled 'Federation: The Only Achievable Solution', published in issue 12 of Eks Iparhis in 2000, the presence of settlers is described as an existential threat for both ethnic communities of the island:

> Finally, we must mention that partition, towards which anti-federalist and co-federalist voices are leading us towards, will not be the end. We will not be able to live in peace in our little Paradise, in a second Greek state, even if it is half of it. The fatal result of such a policy would be, in the last instance, the complete disappearance of Turkish Cypriots and the flooding of the occupied territories with settlers, who, at some point, will seek out living space and will pour out unto the free territories. In contrast, a federal solution, in the way we envision it, will stop the flow of settlers, and in the last instance, life itself will work in favour of the centripetal forces (Tsielepis 2000: 25).

The federal reunification of the island is thus here suggested as the only mode of action through which the settlers, painted here as an external, aggressive demographic group, can be stopped from overtaking the local Cypriot population. Similarly, in an anonymous 2011 article titled 'We Received a Federal State, Let's Pass Down a Federal State', propagating support for federal reunification, published on the Epanenosi2011 blog, settlers are represented negatively, in antithesis to Turkish Cypriots:

> Partition arrived in 1974 due to the maximalism of Greek Cypriots and the expansionism of Turkey. Partition is here, and how can this be forgotten or retreated to the back of the mind of Greek Cypriots? […] [It is here] with Turkish Cypriots suffocating, being a minority in their own country, their future depending on the choices and appetites of the Turkish settlers and of Turkey… […] This is also our struggle, after all, the liberation of Turkish Cypriots from the illegality of occupation… (Anon 2011b).

Settlers are here distinguished from Turkish Cypriots, represented collectively as one of the primal causes for Turkish Cypriot suffering. The text reifies, in the category of the 'settler', formal Turkish political aims and policy, attaching to the settler population collective agency, as well as power over the Turkish Cypriot community. In another 2011 anonymous pro-reunification text from the Epanenosi2011 blog, titled 'Only Liberation is Solution-Reunification', the presence of settlers is again stressed as an existential threat to Turkish Cypriots, as well as a negative development for the rest of the local population:

> We want the Solution so that the Turkish Cypriot community will be saved, as it is now directly in danger. The systematic marginalisation of this Cypriot population and

> its replacement with a far greater population from Turkey, can only create additional pressures to the totality of the Cypriot people (Anon 2011c).

In another article published in 2011 in issue 16 of Kalemi, titled 'Apology, Forgiving and Empathy', the different perceptions of belonging in relation to Turkish Cypriots and settlers is articulated:

> The northern part of our country is being filled constantly with settlers. The demographic reality continuously changes at the expense of our Turkish Cypriot compatriots. It is time for all of us to realise that our motherland is Cyprus. We are Greeks, they are Turks, and we have our particularities and differences, but we are all Cypriots (Pachis 2011: 6).

Cyprus is here placed as the primary signifier of identification and belonging, with settlers identified, as it has been the case in all presented extracts, as a population group external to Cyprus. The reference to the ethnic identity of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots highlights the primacy of Cypriotness as a marker for belonging – Turkish Cypriots, while identified in the text as ethnically Turkish, are fellow Cypriot compatriots, while settlers, typically assumed to be ethnic Turks from Turkey, are not subsumed under the category of Cypriotness; located fundamentally outside of it. Similar representations repeat themselves in another anonymous 2011 text from the Epanenosi2011 blog, titled 'Let us Smash Nationalism, Bring the Solution!'. Critical of positions equating federal reunification with compromise, the text represents Turkish Cypriots as 'compatriots', 'brothers' and 'part of our people', while settlers are represented as fundamentally external to the two communities, as a demographic group threatening the survival of Turkish Cypriots. Their presence remaining unwelcomed, it is suggested that settlers should be expelled from the island following reunification:

> The solution that entails full compromise came with the settlers, the declaration of the "T.R.N.C.", the development of the occupied territories, and of course with Greek Cypriot maximalism, our uncurable Grivism,[49] our comfort in partition, our refusal to

[49] This is a reference to George Grivas, commander of the EOKA organisation that undertook guerrilla warfare against the British in the 1950s. Following independence, Grivas formed the EOKA B organisation, which carried attacks against the Makarios government, ultimately collaborating in the coup that triggered the Turkish invasion of 1974. Grivas is today associated with Greek Cypriot nationalism, particularly its far-right variants.

> see Turkish Cypriots as our compatriots, as a part of our people… Absolute compromise is permanent partition… […] It is the continuation of Turkish settlement and the disappearing of our brothers, the Turkish Cypriots… […] WE WANT THE SOLUTION! Solution and Reunification! Demilitarization! Peace! To leave behind this dark nationalism, our racism, our fascism… To finally breathe, to have the Turkish army and the hundreds of thousands of settlers leave… (Anon 2011a).

Only two texts in the collected documents offered a relatively favourable perspective on settlers. The first was written by the anti-authoritarian group Falies in 2010 and was subsequently reproduced on the Epanenosi2011 blog. Titled 'Five Positions for the Reunification Process of the Country', the text addressed reunification as a broader political process, critically opposing Greek Cypriot anti-federalist positions. In a section negatively discussing positions which reject any reunification plan that does not reinstate all lost property to Greek Cypriot refugees, the question of settlers is addressed:

> [A]dmirers of "human rights" always add: "for the legal residents of Cyprus", excluding all long-term migrants from Turkey and their descendants, as well as those Turkish Cypriots that have not been naturalised by the Republic of Cyprus. The right to housing and integration for long-term migrants (from Turkey, as well as elsewhere) and for those born on the island, does not exist for Greek Cypriot anti-federalists (Falies 2010).

It is worth noting that the text does not employ the term 'settler', identifying individuals as migrants instead. In doing so, it further challenges homogenised representations, by differentiating between long-term migrants, their descendants, and short-term migrants. Like positions challenging Greek Cypriot narratives of human rights for not including Turkish Cypriots, the text extends consideration of rights to long-term Turkish migrants and Cypriot-born Turks, a position that is not articulated in any other Cypriotist text examined. Nonetheless, in a footnote, the group clarified that:

> We recognise, however, that due to the small size of the Turkish Cypriot community, as well as to stop further demographic changes in the north, some restrictions on the future immigration from Turkey and the naturalisation of Turkish permanent residents of Cyprus in the Turkish Cypriot federated state must be placed (at least for the near future), so that the political and cultural autonomy of the Turkish Cypriot community can be preserved (Falies 2010).

Thus, these individuals are still identified as outsiders in relation to Cypriotness, they remain represented as an external group, rather than as a local migrant population assessed to belong to a broader category of the 'Cypriot people'. Placing Turkish migrants in relation to Turkish Cypriots, the latter retain a prioritisation in status, with restrictions on the former group remaining justified. While the text recognises the rights and discrimination faced by long-term migrants and their descendants, it does so through the retainment of an insider-outsider distinction that we have already seen unfolding in the discourse surrounding migrant populations in the Republic of Cyprus.

The second positive reference to settlers originates in a pro-federation pamphlet titled 'Yes! Federation!', produced by the anti-authoritarian group Syspirosi Atakton in 2016, which argued that reunification will improve the capacity to form grassroots labour, ecological, feminist, and anti-racist initiatives, stating that:

> We anticipate fighting these struggles jointly with all the residents of the island, and for all of them, regardless of the federated state within which they will live, and without giving any merit to their designations as "illegal immigrants", "Athigganoi", "settlers", or "Kalamarades"[50] (Syspirosi Atakton 2016).

The text reiterates and extends the rejection of discrimination and racism towards the settler population, while the political, social, and economic complexity surrounding the settlers is neither explicitly recognized, nor addressed. With the exception of this short extract, references to the settler population in the collected documents fade out after 2011. Similarly, participants did not consider or mention settlers in their responses, aside from Maria, who mentioned the inclusion of settlers after reunification, stating that she imagines a "peaceful progressivist Cyprus, embracing all its people, be it migrants, Turkish settlers, Greek Cypriots, Turkish Cypriots, Maronites [and] English". This apparent silence in relation to settlers perhaps signifies a shift in attitude, a transition towards a less polemical, negative perspective in relation to their presence on the island. However, the absence of a consistent alternative political discourse surrounding the settler population appears to more appropriately reflect Theodoros Rakopoulos' recent insight that settlers are perceived in the Republic of Cyprus as "nobodies", remaining "abject denizens of the North" (2022: 23), neither recognized, nor actively considered in relation to the island's reunification, or to

[50] 'Kalamaras' is a term often employed by Greek Cypriots in everyday speech to describe Greeks. It has evolved to carry negative connotations (Arvaniti 2006b: 28).

Cypriotist senses of identity.

5.6. Concluding Remarks

This chapter aimed to examine how different demographic groups are mediated in Cypriotist political discourse. From all groups examined, it is unequivocally the Turkish Cypriot community that is the most positively represented, with Turkish Cypriots viewed as fellow Cypriots of equal stature to Greek Cypriots. This representation extends to the community as a whole, rather than merely to its individual members, collectively represented as equal to the Greek Cypriot community, or, to phrase it in the political lingo specific to the Cyprus Dispute, Turkish Cypriots are recognised and represented as a political community, rather than as an ethnic minority, reflecting a schema of representation compatible with the principle of bi-communality. Cypriotist discourses further object to, and openly critique competing representations that locate Turkish Cypriots as the national other of Greek Cypriots, conceptualising instead both communities as integral parts of the category of the 'Cypriot people'.

In contrast, while migrant populations residing in the Republic are consistently represented positively, and discriminatory attitudes and practises against them are highlighted, opposed, and condemned, migrants are firmly located as outsiders in Cypriotist discourse. Represented primarily as foreigners, no existing migrant group is claimed to belong, readily or potentially, to the category of the 'Cypriot people', with migrants left out of any discursively formulated conception of Cypriotness. This dynamic of representation can also be observed in the discursive approach taken on the Cypriot Roma, when compared to the approach on Turkish Cypriots. While the former are recognised as citizens whose rights must be respected, the latter are represented in more emotive terms, as 'compatriots' and 'brothers', signifying Turkish Cypriots as closer to Greek Cypriots on a fundamental level.[51] The discourse surrounding the Cypriot Roma is in fact almost identical to the one surrounding the migrant population, as it is characterised by opposition to discrimination and respect of human rights, without claiming the demographic group as integral to a 'Cypriot people', demarcating them therefore as outsiders to the category.

[51] While the gendered nature of these terms is notable, it should not be exaggerated, as they primarily reflect the long-standing linguistic convention of using masculine-as-generic, as the Greek grammar does not provide any gender-neutral form for most terms of address (Holton et al. 2012: 320).

The exclusionary dynamic embedded in the discourse is directly evident in relation to the settler population, which is consistently represented, despite a few exceptions, as an external, alien, and threatening group. The discourse surrounding the settlers is often emotive, echoing expressions typically associated with anti-immigration discourses, such as 'flooding', 'extinction' and 'suffocation' (Trimikliniotis 1999: 151). Nonetheless, it should be recognised that the ethnicity, culture, race, or religion of the settler population is never highlighted in the texts, in contrast to dominant expressions of anti-settler sentiment on both sides of the divide, which are, more often than not, directly racist or xenophobic in character (Christiansen 2005: 165). Thus, while Cypriotist texts do produce a dehumanising discourse in relation to the settler population, attributing only negative qualities to settlers, while avoiding any recognition of the complexity of their positioning in Turkish Cypriot society, Cypriotist anti-settler discourse is not racialised, remaining consistent with the broader principles of anti-racism which characterise it. Opposition to the settler population appears to be primarily driven by concerns over the violation of international law, as well as changes in demography attributed to Turkey's policy of Turkification, rather than out of ethnic, cultural, or racial concerns themselves.

These findings are consistent, to a certain extent, with past contributions in the literature, which have stressed the progressive values accompanying Cypriotism, such as anti-racism and cultural tolerance (Trimikliniotis 1999, Rakopoulos 2022: 8-9), as well as the elevated status of Turkish Cypriots in Greek Cypriot Cypriotist senses of belonging (Peristianis 2008: 249). Nonetheless, the findings also deviate from the literature to the extent that they highlight how the category of the 'Cypriot people' is demarcated in Cypriotism in a negative fashion, by producing a discourse over belonging which prioritises the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities, while excluding, in parallel, settlers and migrants to such a belonging, representing them as outsiders to the category. This mode of discursive conceptualisation follows patterns of national imagination, as the Cypriot population is demarcated through "finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations" (Anderson 2008: 7), producing an alternative national imagined community to the ones formulated by Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism.

A number of perspectives presented in the previous chapter may appear to be in contradiction with the findings outlined above, as participants largely emphasized cultural pluralism and inclusivity when expressing their views on Cypriot identity, while the current findings indicate, in contrast, processes of exclusion which are located at the heart of Cypriotist

political discourse. As it will become more apparent in the following chapters, this contradiction runs throughout Cypriotism as a political ideology, indicating a tension between its commitment to anti-discrimination and opposition to Greek Cypriot nationalism, on the one hand, and the formulation of a Cypriot identity that is necessarily restrictive and finite, on the other. The following chapter, which explores the intersection between claims towards Cypriotness and language, highlights further the inherent dimension of this contradiction.

6. Language Claims and Cypriotness

Drawing on both collected documents and participants' responses, this chapter explores perceptions surrounding language use in Cyprus. The chapter begins by contextualizing the political contestation surrounding language in the Republic of Cyprus, briefly presenting the island's linguistic terrain, highlighting the predominance of a distinct, Cypriot Greek language variety as the main vernacular language within the Greek Cypriot community. Noting that the differences between Modern Standard Greek and the Cypriot Greek language variety create a linguistic terrain characterized by diglossia, the chapter moves on to briefly explore Greek Cypriot nationalist perceptions surrounding language.

The chapter continues by examining how linguistic differentiation is evoked as a cultural marker for differentiation, signifying Cyprus as a cultural space inherently different and independent from Greece and Turkey. Linguistic difference is however not merely claimed in relation to the Greek Cypriot community, but is further extended to the Turkish Cypriot community, through the recognition of the distinctness of the Cypriot Turkish language variety. The chapter thus explores in detail how linguistic differentiation is evoked to both designate Cyprus as autonomous from Greece and Turkey, and to construct a broader sense of inclusiveness internal to the island.

The chapter further discusses two identified perspectives surrounding language, a bi-communal perspective, which prioritizes the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot language varieties as the languages of Cyprus, placing them on an equal symbolic footing, and a less prominent, pluralistic perspective, which implicitly rejects the bi-communal schema, incorporating in its representations a multiplicity of language varieties. Exploring these perspectives, the chapter concludes by noting their point of convergence in their prioritization of language varieties associated with population groups commonly perceived to be native to the island, while the languages employed by migrants are in parallel not claimed as part of a Cypriot pluralistic cultural landscape, indicating the extent to which language acts as a cultural marker of inclusion, as well as exclusion to Cypriotness.

6.1. The Politics of Language Use in Cyprus

The relationship between language and national identity has remained in dispute in social theory. Language is undoubtedly recognized as one of many elements upon which modern nations have been built. However, in contrast to ethnicity, claimed common history, homogeneous culture, territory and religion, language has often been given a secondary role in analysis, with other factors being prioritized (Sefran 2004: 1). For Étienne Balibar (1990), for example, emphasis is placed on the centrality of the modern state, with its accompanied political and civic distinctions, while Eric Hobsbawm linked the prioritization, codification, and standardization of a single language variety with political, ideological, and pragmatic concerns, emerging through the necessity of universal literacy in modernity, instituted via a centralized educational system (1996: 1072). For Ernest Gellner, language relates to homogenization, as nation-states emerge in industrial society in need of a common language enabling efficient communication within an increasingly complex set of socio-economic relations – language is thus perceived primarily through its functionality, as well as through the broader processes of rationalization and cultural homogenization accompanying the emergence of modern political, economic, and social structures (Gellner 1983: 21).

In the work of Benedict Anderson, language remains central to the concept of the imagined community, at least during the formative years of nation-building, through the formation of a collective identity connected with territory; and consolidated by the printed press (2006: 44). Nonetheless, Anderson's focus is placed on the codification of vernacular languages in written form, rather than on the central role that language can potentially play in-itself as a marker for self-identification. Lastly, Michael Billig (1995) paid little attention to linguistic differentiation and its relation to national identity, a dimension of social relations that does not fit well with the thesis of banal nationalism – linguistic difference can seldom become a mere banality, while under specific circumstances, it can carry the social implications of the stigmatized individual described extensively in Erving Goffman's *Stigma* (1990). As William Safran pointed out, the downplaying of language in the analysis of nationalism is not merely linked to the observation that national consciousness can emerge, crystallize and survive without necessarily evoking, or prioritizing linguistic identification, but also due to the inherent flexibility of language, vis-à-vis other identity markers in modern society (2004: 2-3). An individual can learn or adapt to a new language variety depending on societal expectations and potential improvements to her social mobility, but cannot simply change her ethnicity, would usually not be readily willing to convert to a different faith, or her

background might not appropriately fit within existing perceptions of common ancestry and territory (Safran 2004: 2-3).

Cyprus presents an interesting linguistic terrain, where multiple language varieties have historically co-existed on different levels of formal and informal interaction. Varieties employed in everyday speech have included Cypriot Greek and Cypriot Turkish, the linguistic variants of Greek and Turkish particular to the island, Sanna, an Arabic variant spoken historically by Cypriot Maronites; and Western Armenian, spoken by the Cypriot Armenian community (Tsiplakou 2006: 337). Prior to the events leading to the de-facto demographic partition of the island, individuals belonging to one ethnic community were often also speakers of a language variety associated with another community. For example, in several Turkish Cypriot villages, the mother tongue of the local population was Cypriot Greek, rather than Cypriot Turkish and bilingualism was not uncommon, primarily within the Turkish Cypriot community (Özerk 2001: 259). The increase of immigration to the island on both sides of the buffer zone from the 1970s onwards, has further enriched this linguistic plurality. While available data are hard to locate, demographic changes suggest that there is a notable increase in speakers of Russian, Filipino, French, and Arabic, as well as of other Greek and Turkish language varieties, as members of new ethnic communities become permanent residents of Cyprus (Akçali 2007: 69).

In parallel to the spoken vernaculars, codified versions of Greek and Turkish have been predominantly employed in education, mass media and formal politics, since the early 20th century. These codified versions have consistently corresponded to the language varieties formally employed by the Greek and Turkish states. English remained the formal language of administration until the dismantling of the British colonial regime in 1960, its influence however stretching into the post-colonial period through judicial, commercial, and bureaucratic use (Hadjioannou et al. 2011: 23). With the formation of the Republic of Cyprus, Greek and Turkish were constitutionally entrenched as the formal languages of the newly independent state. This governmental bilingualism was however short lived and suspended after 1964, following the monopolization of the Republic of Cyprus by the Greek Cypriot community, making Greek de-facto the sole language of the state and its accompanying institutions. Nonetheless, bilingualism remains present on a minimal level, with Turkish still appearing on government buildings, identification documents, and currency.

For the majority of Greek Cypriots, Cypriot Greek remains the language variety employed in everyday life, a variety that is largely unintelligible to a mainland Greek speaker, maintaining significant differentiation in vocabulary, phonetics, and syntax, with extensive incorporation of Arabic, Turkish, French, English and Italian loanwords (Arvaniti 2006a: 18).[52] Nonetheless, while increasingly employed in musical production, film, television, theatre and literary writing, Cypriot Greek is not taught in public education and has not been formally standardized (Pastellopoulos 2022b). The difference between the vernacular spoken, and the language variety taught and formally employed, carves the linguistic terrain of the Republic of Cyprus, which is characterized, as Andreas Papapavlou and Pavlos Pavlou have pointed out, by diglossia, since Cypriot Greek remains dominant in the informal, personal dimensions of speech, while Modern Standard Greek is expected to be utilized in specific contexts, ranging from writing and formal documentation, to the mass media, public education and political discourse (1998: 213).[53]

Diglossia is further entrenched through symbolic associations of superiority and inferiority attached to the use of each language variety. Cypriot Greek has historically been perceived and presented as merely another dialect of Greek, inherently inferior to the Modern Standard variety, and thus inadequate for artistic expression, sophisticated dialogue, complex thinking, or even polite engagement (Papapavlou 1998: 25).[54] Placed within this dialectic of inferiority and superiority, the Cypriot Greek vernacular is presented as a localized, underdeveloped dialect, while the mainland variety is perceived as an advanced, proper language, leading to the consistent undermining of Cypriot Greek as a respectable language variety (Hadjioannou 2021: 60). The distinction between ‘language’ and ‘dialect’ is however widely recognized as an inherently political one in sociolinguistics, a theoretical insight popularized by linguist Max Weinreich; through the utilization of a statement of unknown origin clarifying that “a language is a dialect with an army and a navy” (Crowley 2006: 23), highlighting the centrality of state institutions in codifying, standardizing and formally employing a language

[52] A similar situation exists between Cypriot Turkish and Standard Turkish, further entrenching perceptions of difference amongst Turkish Cypriots in relation to mainland Turks (Kızılyürek & Gautier-Kızılyürek 2004: 49).

[53] Diglossia has also existed within the confines of the Greek state at least until the replacement of Katharevousa, an artificially constructed version of Greek, with Demotic Greek, following the fall of the Greek military junta in 1974 (Pavlidou 1991: 280). However, this shift has not resolved the diglossia found in Cyprus, as Demotic Greek and Cypriot Greek are also extensively different.

[54] For a summary exploring how the use of Cypriot Greek has shifted in later years, see Pastellopoulos (2022b).

variety in an official capacity, at the expense of alternative varieties. In the peculiar case of the Republic of Cyprus, the formal employment of a specific variety of Greek has been inherently connected with the hegemony and ideological claims of Greek Cypriot nationalism, as well as with the de-facto transformation of the bi-communal Republic of Cyprus into a mono-communal state, following 1964.

In all its variations, Greek nationalism asserts the trans-historical existence of the Greek nation, through a grand narration identifying the nation's survival from antiquity onwards, with the pivotal moment in the nation's history remaining the Greek Revolution of 1821 (Triandafyllidou & Paraskevopoulou 2002: 80). This narration paints the image of a common history for the members of the nation, who are defined through a combination of ancestral, religious, cultural, and historical characteristics. One aspect of this claimed transhistoricity is the presentation of a unified, single Greek language, evolving and surviving during periods of conquest and foreign occupation, until the establishment of the modern Greek state (Mackridge 2009: 232). Inheriting these ideological claims, Greek Cypriot nationalists asserted that Cyprus is but a particular part of a broader Hellenic commonwealth and subsequently converted the Cypriot state into a mono-communal polity through symbolic and structural alterations, aiming to reaffirm the claimed Hellenic heritage and identity of the island. These symbolic alterations have been extensive, becoming embedded into social and political life, in a similar fashion to the processes described by Billig in *Banal Nationalism* (1995).

Ranging from the adoption of the Greek national anthem as the official anthem of the Republic, to the raising of the Greek flag alongside the Cypriot flag on public buildings, and the official commemoration of Greek national holidays by the Cypriot state, a Hellenocentric symbolic sphere has been crystalized, presenting Cyprus as a natural extension of the broader Hellenic world (Pastellopoulos 2018: 50-51). As an integral part of this transformation, the Ministry of Education was established in 1965. Since the constitution of the Republic did not include a centralized Ministry of Education, devolving instead educational matters to each community's legislative Communal Chamber (Kızılyürek 2019: 588), the creation of the Ministry, alongside the parallel self-abolition of the Greek Communal Chamber, crystalized Greek Cypriot education as the universal education of the Republic. Public educational policy, in turn, acquired a heavily monocultural character, placing Greek Cypriot nationalist values and historical narration at its core. Modern Standard Greek thus became the

undisputed language of universal public education, with the use of Cypriot Greek either banned, or discouraged within the classroom (Hajisoteriou et al 2012: 393-394).

As Roger Christofides argued, the symbolic prioritization of Modern Standard Greek over and above the Cypriot Greek variety, is situated within broader ideological claims regarding national identity, as the use of Modern Standard Greek "presents Greek identity as a natural, obvious and organic Cypriot trait" (2010: 424). The employment, preservation, and maintenance of Modern Standard Greek's status is thus equated with the reproduction and preservation of a Greek national identity (Christofides 2010: 423). Attempts to elevate the status of Cypriot Greek have therefore been typically met with suspicion, opposition, and refusal on an institutional level, since such an elevation is understood to entail the potentiality of de-Hellenization, a suspicion that has been raised in similar cases throughout the Greek-speaking world (Exertzoglou 1999: 81).[55] The depreciation of the status of Modern Standard Greek vis-à-vis Cypriot Greek, is thus perceived as an erosion of Greek national identity itself. Greek Cypriot nationalist argumentation over the 'essence' of Cypriot Greek has however remained contradictory. On the one hand, Cypriot Greek has been presented as an inferior dialect, polluted with oriental loanwords and foreign phonetics, and on the other, it has been projected as a language variety standing closer to ancient Greek, reaffirming the historical roots of Hellenism in Cyprus (Christofides 2010: 423).

Tensions over language use in Cyprus typically remain on the margin of political contestations. Nonetheless, they momentarily unfolded in public discourse during the mass mobilizations that took place in the winter of 2021. On the 20th February, the streets of Nicosia were filled with the chants of 10,000 protestors, taking part in the second Os Dame (That's Enough!) protest. Breaking lockdown regulations, which prohibited, among other things, public mobilizations, protestors marched against police brutality, state authoritarianism and lack of investment in public health and education. The preceding week saw extensive support accumulating in favor of the protest, after police forces violently

[55] This suspicion is readily evident in the views promoted by Georgios Babiniotis, one of the most known and influential linguists and philologists in the Greek-speaking world, who argued in a newspaper article in 1992 that the codification and public teaching of dialects will lead to the "splitting of the Greek language into local forms of the national language [...] which will be even more subject to intense foreign influences, to creolisation, and alienation from the common expression of Hellenism. That which unites Hellenism everywhere is language, tradition and Orthodoxy. And the distance from the common language is the most intense feeling of cultural loneliness and national alienation" (Babiniotis 2022: 401).

repressed the first attempt at staging a mobilization on the 13th February, leading to widespread criticism against the government. At the front of what was undeniably the largest political protest of the past decade, a banner was held with the words 'Health, Solidarity, Resistance', rendered in both Greek and Turkish.

The right-wing Anastasiades government, then in office, chose to largely ignore the Os Dame protests, never addressing publicly their demands. Nonetheless, some minimal interventions in the public discourse did occur. One such intervention came from the Minister of Education, Prodromos Prodromou, who released a statement negatively commenting on the Os Dame committee, the informal organization coordinating the various political groups staging the mobilizations. Prodromou appeared to criticize both the use of Cypriot Greek, as the words 'Os Dame' originate in the local language variety and are not present in Standard Modern Greek, as well as the supposed failure of the organizing committee to spell the word 'Dame' in the correct fashion:

> As for the scathing effort, to use an expression from the Cypriot dialect instead of the common Greek (which of course cannot be berated, with the exception of wrong spelling) we must remember that the word "damai", which is found also as "dahamai" (= here, hamai) comes directly from ancient Greek, underlining the origins and substance of our people (Anon 2021).

The Minister's statement concentrates the contradictions characteristic of the politics surrounding language use in the Republic. The utilization of Cypriot Greek is viewed with suspicion, its employment perceived as a tactic to depreciate Greek national identity. This depreciation is thus counteracted by discursively reinstating Cypriot Greek as a dialect and offshoot of the Greek language, proclaiming that the very words employed in the protests only reaffirm the national character and history of Cyprus, since they originate, after all, in ancient Greece. The emphasis on the spelling of a non-standardized language variety is here employed as a secondary level of delegitimization, by implying that the Os Dame committee lacked a sound knowledge of the language variety it employed. Language thus remains a field of political contestation in Cyprus, as the symbolic status of language varieties intersects with notions of national identity. Nonetheless, the political meanings and claims attached by individuals and groups consciously supporting the use of Cypriot Greek, have been seldom explored, with most academic research focusing on pedagogical and linguistic concerns (Papapavlou & Pavlou 1998, Ioannidou 2012, Hajisoteriou et al. 2012).

Questions surrounding language were not explicitly asked in the qualitative survey. The status of Cypriot Greek, as well as that of other language varieties historically present on the island, was however repeatedly evoked in participants' responses, while the topic of language emerged at various instances in the collected documents. These responses were characterized by an understanding of tension between Cypriot Greek and Modern Standard Greek, with the two language varieties explicitly or implicitly placed within an antagonistic relation. Language differentiation was further presented as a signification of Cypriotness, with a series of language varieties claimed as distinctly Cypriot, in contrast to Modern Standard Greek, which was often argued to be a language variety external to the island. The argumentation over, and attachment towards language use in Cyprus presented a notable example where cultural factors were directly connected to the rejection of a Greek national identity, claiming a Cypriot identity instead.

6.2. Language as an Identity Marker

Conflicts over language are not merely reducible to inter-ethnic conflict, but can reflect broader political contestations, including those of class, religion, as well as relations between ruler and ruled. Thus, languages are not merely employed in the formation and reproduction of nation-states but are further utilized as a means of political control (Sefran 2004: 4), and opposition to a particular language policy, or status of a language variety, can itself act as a "a form of protest against political domination" (Eriksen 1993: 110). In the context of Cyprus, disputes surrounding language are primarily connected with the hegemony of, and opposition towards, Greek (Cypriot) and Turkish (Cypriot) nationalism. For example, Paris, a Greek Cypriot man in his late 30s, described Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalisms in colonial terms, connecting their dominance with the negative status surrounding Cypriot Greek and Cypriot Turkish:

> Rather than an ethnic cleansing, it's a purification over the years, to sound more Greek, or sound more Turkish. Have you heard how Greek Cypriots raise their child? They speak to it with guidance, in Greek-Greek, not Cypriot Greek. Imagine how that cultivates the identity of the kid. I also see this with people who have kids, on the Left. The nationalist discourse is so pervasive that it's normal. […] Somewhat self-determination is still implicated in a colonial leftover, of being only Greek or only Turkish. I think that the domination of nationalism now is pervasive because it

> implicates identity by shaping education, by going hand in hand with the Church, and Hellenizing language to sound and be more 'pure' (Paris, Migratory Background, Male).

The dominance of Modern Standard Greek in public education, as well as its employment within inter-personal contexts typically reserved for Cypriot Greek, are here identified with (Greek Cypriot) nationalism, as expressions of broader processes of cultural homogenization aiming to Hellenise the vernacular, in an attempt to cultivate an exclusively Greek identity. Described through terms suggesting a colonial relation, Modern Standard Greek is here signified as a language variety external and imposed, rather than integral to the Greek Cypriot community. Placed within this relation of power, it is implied that the use of Cypriot Greek, as well as Cypriot Turkish, expresses a form of subtle resistance towards nationalist attempts to culturally 'purify' the island by fading out elements signifying differentiation with the broader Greek and Turkish national communities.

Defence of Cypriot Greek was also commonly expressed when language was discussed in the collected documents. In two articles located in Eks Iparhis examining the adoption of standardized toponyms by the government, the official selections are challenged, opposed, and questioned. The standardization of toponyms, which began in the 1960s, has been surrounded by controversy, as the proposed renditions have systematically excluded Cypriot phonetics, resulting in constructed pronunciations that had not previously existed in everyday speech (Hadjioannou et al. 2011: 26). The controversy has further extended to romanized versions of toponyms, with critics arguing that some versions are at best questionable, adopted at the expense of historically present toponymical renditions.

In the first article, titled 'Paphos or Pafos?' And published in issue 1 of Eks Iparhis in 1999, the adoption of 'Pafos'; instead of 'Paphos' as the romanized rendition of the city's name; is heavily criticised as "completely artificial" (Georgiadis 1999: 40), originating in historical misspellings from non-native writers. While phonetically identical, the first spelling corresponds closely to the Greek version of the city's name (Πάφος), converging the romanized standardization with the Greek rendition. After presenting a series of historical texts utilizing the second spelling to show the rendering's historical continuity, the article concluded by stating that:

> Today it is a universally accepted axiom to preserve the elements of the oldest civilizations that have survived to the present day. [...] Changing the historical writing

> of a toponym is no different than the demolition of a church and the construction of a new one. It is an act of violent eradication, or of a forgery of the past, and for this reason it is condemnable (Georgiadis 1999: 40).

Concerns of eradication are further reflected in the second article, titled 'Sillourokampos, or perhaps Shilourokampos?', published in issue 5 of Eks Iparhis in 1999, which addresses the systematic alteration of toponyms through a standardization that consciously avoids rendering local phonetics appropriately:

> The problem of proper spelling in the writing of the Cypriot dialect through the Greek alphabet, does not appear to have seriously bothered anyone up to this point. The reverse, in fact, appears to be taking place in the translation of Cypriot toponyms in the Latin alphabet, where a clear attempt has been made to eradicate the unique pronunciation found in the Cypriot dialect. The result, in my opinion, has been that the Cypriot toponyms have been translated between two coordinates, that of the ridiculous and the incomprehensible (Pagiatas 1999: 58).

Continuing by arguing that "[…] the false rendering, or intentional distortion of the dialect we speak, is nothing less than an undermining of our own history" (Pagiatas 1999: 59), the article presents a documentation of the various influences identifiable in Cypriot Greek, including Doric and Byzantine Greek, the enrichment of the vernacular's vocabulary by Italian and French words during Frankish and Venetian rule, and the subsequent influence of Turkish during the Ottoman period.

It is worthwhile to briefly examine this genealogy, as it reflects a perception of Cypriot history in contradiction with dominant Greek Cypriot nationalist narrations. This incompatibility is located, fundamentally, on the emphasis placed on multiple linguistic, and thus cultural influences on the vernacular, in contrast to the claim of a continuous Hellenic culture being maintained uninterrupted and unaffected throughout the unfolding of Cypriot history. The historical trajectory evoked here through the vernacular is thus one that is particular to Cyprus, rather than subsumed under a universal Hellenic history, painting an image of specificity and contextuality. As noted by Christofides (2010) in his theoretical reflections on Cypriot Greek, the multiplicity of cultural influences characterizing the vernacular enables the possibility of signifying an alternative historical experience to Hellenic monoculturalism, as "Cypriot Greek contains, despite the drive to decontaminate it, the mark of Cypriot polyculturalism" (2010: 424).

In another article titled ‘Forms of Cultural Repression and Legitimization of Power’, published in issue 41 of Eks Iparhis in 2003, the New Cyprus Association, one of the first self-described Cypriotist organisations, heavily criticized the Ministry of Education for continuing to forbid the employment of Cypriot Greek in the classroom, arguing that the policy is rooted in Greek Cypriot nationalist ideology, which views Cypriot Greek as an inferior and undesirable linguistic element in Cypriot society:

> The treatment of the Cypriot dialect by the powers of the state, which was ideologically based on Greek nationalism, tended at best to treat it as a folklore soon to disappear, or as a barbaric linguistic version that had to be replaced by the correct Greek recorded in the books imported from Athens. In the most extreme cases, officials of the ministry have led the fight against the Cypriot dialect, in the name of Hellenocentrism and the Hellenization of toponyms (New Cyprus Association 2003: 17).

Describing the Ministry of Education as the “local Ministry of the natives” (New Cyprus Association 2003: 18), echoing parallelisms of colonial relations between metropole and periphery, the article further critiqued the primacy of Greek educational policy over Greek Cypriot educational institutions, concluding with the necessity of permitting the use of Cypriot Greek in the classroom:

> Is it time to openly assert the dignity of our words, our sounds? However, beyond this assertion of dignity, it is also an imperative educational need to recognize the use of Cypriot in the classroom as a right of the students. As a right to knowledge, since this linguistic code is their mother tongue and the requirement to express themselves only in modern Greek condemns many of them to silence (New Cyprus Association 2003: 18).

Thus, the relationship between Cypriot Greek and Modern Standard Greek is perceived as conflictual, reflecting ideological tensions over (national) identity, as well as of unequal relations of power located in formal institutions, with particular focus placed on the state and its educational policy. Cypriot Greek is further claimed to maintain a historicity that is at the very same time both worth preserving, but also particular to Cyprus, forming a first level of differentiation from dominant narrations aiming to reaffirm the island’s transhistorical belonging to the Hellenic world. This differentiation appears at first glance, rather subtle. It becomes however more evident when we reflect on the claims of Cypriot Greek as a mother

tongue, a position in direct contradiction with Greek nationalist perspectives, in which all speakers of Greek language varieties are claimed to speak Greek as their mother tongue, with little to no recognition or differentiation ascribed between each variety.

The employment of a different language variety to Modern Standard Greek has therefore been mentioned systematically in relation to self-identification, as a cultural marker differentiating (Greek) Cypriots from mainland Greeks, often articulated as a tensioned, exclusionary relation. For example, Nicolas, a Greek Cypriot man in his 30s, directly connected his personal rejection of a Greek national identity by evoking linguistic differentiation. As he clarified, "Cypriot identity could mean the Cypriot language (the dialects of Greek and Turkish)", further stating that "I do not feel Greek, only because I speak the Cypriot dialect of the Greek language". Cypriot identity is here presented as independent of, and incompatible with Greek identity, in contrast to alternative perspectives, which either synthesize the two identifications, or subsume the former under the latter (Peristianis 2008: 243). The highlighting of both Cypriot Greek and Cypriot Turkish language varieties produces a further claim of differentiation from the national 'motherlands' for both sides of the divide. Both language varieties are represented here as equally legitimate for the claiming of an autonomous Cypriot identity, despite the fact that they linguistically belong to different language groups.

Another notable example is the response of Thanasis, a Greek Cypriot man in his early 20s:

> [A]s there are so many cultural ties with everyone in our region I, on many occasions, say what helps me in a specific situation. For example, I can be a Turk, a Greek or a Cypriot whenever I choose to be. Fundamentally however, I consider myself Cypriot based upon the fact that I grew up in Cyprus, I follow Cypriot politics 'as my own', and feel 'at home' when I am in Cyprus and/or speak the Cypriot dialect/language (Thanasis, Greek Cypriot, Male).

Thanasis' response suggests the ability to pass as a member of a different national group depending on a specific social context, a phenomenon that has been previously documented in the work of Caesar Mavratsas, on the construction of Greek Cypriot national identity (1998: 167-168). Nonetheless, Thanasis concludes his response by identifying fundamentally as a Cypriot, citing, among other key factors, his use of Cypriot Greek. Like other participants, Thanasis' response further implicitly challenges the depreciated status of Cypriot Greek, by including the term 'language' alongside the term 'dialect' in his answer.

Similarly, Alexandra, a Greek Cypriot woman in her 30s, mentioned language as a key element for her self-identification, stating that "I would describe myself as a Greek-speaking Cypriot, because I was born and live in Cyprus, I have adopted, culturally, Cypriot culture and my mother tongue is Cypriot Greek". While Cypriot Greek is again presented as central for self-identification, being distinguished from Modern Standard Greek by being described as a mother tongue, the self-description of Alexandra as a "Greek-speaking Cypriot" adds a further layer of differentiation. By specifically employing language in her self-description, Greekness is removed as an ethnic prefix; while Cypriots are not reduced to the Greek speakers of the island, in contrast to narratives claiming Cyprus as an inherently and undeniably Greek cultural space.

For Marios, a Greek Cypriot man in his 30s, linguistic differentiation is again considered central to the claiming of a Cypriot identity. However, the ongoing division of the island is identified as a fundamental barrier for its clear consolidation and crystallization:

> Cypriot identity exists, but not as a clearly structured independent identity. It is important to note that during the previous years the Cypriot element was ridiculed and scorned. Nonetheless, it is clearly present in speech and cultural traditions. Even though the dialect exists in both communities and Cypriot elements can be located in the Turkish Cypriot and the Greek Cypriot dialects, but also in the common Cypriot words, it is not common and structured, following the division of the two communities (Marios, Greek Cypriot, Male).

In yet another response, Max, a genderqueer Greek Cypriot, pointed out that Cypriot identity "is connected […] with our language, Cypriot Turkish and Cypriot Greek, our music, our dances, food, history, costumes, celebrations, folk customs, and traditions". While the various cultural markers identified are presented as unified entities, language, similarly to the responses of Paris, Nicolas and Marios, is conceptualized as multi-layered, incorporating both Cypriot Greek and Cypriot Turkish as integral aspects of the island's linguistic heritage.

This dimension becomes more evident if we reflect on the terms employed. In everyday speech, Cypriot Greek is simply referred to as *Kypriaka*, translating directly to 'Cypriot', lacking any specified prefix, emanating a sense of universality. In contrast, participants tended to employ terms that are typically uncommon when speaking about the vernacular, such as "Greek Cypriot dialect" and "Cypriot Greek", and/or making direct references to

Cypriot Turkish.[56] Thus, while Cypriot Greek is evoked to demarcate difference in relation to Greece, signifying a local Cypriot identity independent from the claims of Greek (Cypriot) nationalism, the vernacular itself is presented as a particularity, rather than the universal language variety of Cyprus – Cypriotness is therefore not subsumed under one community, consistently being conveyed as bi-communal instead.

6.3. Unity through Difference

Cypriot Greek is therefore, on the one hand, utilized as a marker of differentiation, upon which a uniquely Cypriot identity, independent of the national 'motherlands', can be affirmed. As part of this process, the inferior status attached to Cypriot Greek is further challenged, conflicting with hegemonic positions downplaying the linguistic character and value of the vernacular. It is worth pointing out that another notable practise in challenging the status of Cypriot Greek, is the production and circulation of political texts written exclusively in the vernacular, despite its ongoing non-standardization.[57] Such texts rarely address questions surrounding language as such. But as they are typically produced by individuals and groups opposing Greek Cypriot nationalism, the very act of producing these texts is a political statement in-itself.

On the other hand, however, Cypriot Greek is not delineated as the only linguistic marker for differentiation. Opposition to the symbolic dominance of Modern Standard Greek is not therefore met with the demand of replacing it with Cypriot Greek, as the sole language variety identifiable with Cyprus. Rather, as we can observe in various responses, language difference is often approached bi-communally, with Cypriot Turkish and Cypriot Greek both being claimed as the genuine languages of the island, with no clear prioritization of one over the other, regardless of the number of their speakers, their linguistic difference, or their divergent histories. In a similar pattern surrounding claims regarding Cypriot Greek, the consideration of Cypriot Turkish, rather than Modern Turkish, highlights linguistic, and therefore cultural differences, between Turkish Cypriots and mainland Turks, demarcating

[56] In contrast, collected documents have instead employed the term 'Kypriaka'. This difference can be largely attributed to the medium itself, as articles in political magazines were written to address a general audience and have therefore tended to employ more familiar terms.

[57] Notable examples include the circulation of a pro-federation text produced by the anti-authoritarian group Syspirosi Atakton in English, Modern Standard Greek, and Cypriot Greek (2016), as well as a 2007 article written by the Greek Cypriot hip-hop band 'Part of The Soul' (P.O.T.S. 2016).

lines of inclusion and exclusion in terms of belonging to the category of the 'Cypriot'. In addition, the absence of other language varieties in participants' responses, such as Western Armenian and Sanna, indicate a particular bi-communal schema at play, reflected in the representation of a Cypriot linguistic terrain characterized by two language varieties of equal symbolic status.[58]

Claims over language reflect an alternative imagined community to the one constituted by Greek Cypriot nationalism, corresponding to processes of national imagination identified in the preceding chapter. Firstly, this imagined community is understood as independent of both Greece and Turkey on an ontological level, as linguistic specificity is not subsumed under broader national categories, but is instead evoked through their rejection, and in opposition to them. Secondly, this imagined community, in turn, does not subsume one community under the other – despite not being speakers of Cypriot Turkish, participants acknowledged the vernacular commonly spoken by Turkish Cypriots to highlight both their co-islanders' differentiation from Turkey, as well as their inclusion within a broader, non-ethnic Cypriot identity, on an equal symbolic level. Thus, despite the mutual unintelligibility and linguistic difference between the two vernaculars, both are claimed as identity markers of commonality internal to the island, at the very same time as they are evoked to differentiate Cyprus from its external 'motherlands'.

This schema reflects the broader principle of bi-communality, present in the constitutional structure of the Republic of Cyprus, which is expected to be reinstated in practise under a future federal reunification. Taking this into consideration, we can note that linguistic bi-communality offers an additional challenge to Greek Cypriot nationalism. That is, if Cypriot Greek can be claimed as a mother tongue different from, and independent of, Modern Standard Greek, a claim disturbing Hellenic narratives over identity, the representation of both language varieties as having equal cultural importance further contradicts any claims to monoculturalism, placing the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot community on an equal symbolic footing. Returning to the Os Dame protest, we can thus observe how these linguistic claims materialize in political symbolism, regardless of the collective physical presence (or

[58] It is not claimed here that participants considered Maronite, Armenian and Latin Cypriots, as well as their corresponding language varieties, as external to a Cypriot identity, but rather, that the identification of two specific language varieties instead of others, indicates a prioritization of the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities as equal political subjects.

absence) of Turkish Cypriots within a mobilization.[59] The intentional bilingual rendering of the key protest slogan 'Health, Solidarity, Resistance' in Greek and Turkish, rather than merely in Greek, or any other combination of languages, indicates precisely this symbolic affirmation of bi-communality, signifying a bi-communal image of Cypriot society, in contrast to mono-communal, hegemonic representations, which equate Cyprus with a single community.

While the linking of language questions with desirable political structures was not directly addressed by most participants, Maria, a Greek Cypriot woman in her late 20s, highlighted it. Rejecting any notion of Greekness, she clarified that “we are all Cypriots who just speak different languages/dialects”, adding further that “[w]e should be able to live together harmoniously under one government, under one umbrella Cypriot identity (even the Turkish settlers who [will] remain after a potential solution is reached), with two official dialects and languages”. In Maria’s response, there is a direct connection between language and the state, with both languages and vernaculars entrenched as the formal language varieties of a unified Cypriot polity.

The most vocal expressions linking language to state structures have, however, been located in the collected documents, expressing openly the demand for official bilingualism. For example, in an article titled ‘Two Proposals on the Cyprus Problem’ discussing problems of inter-communal communication, published in issue 6 of the left-wing magazine Kalemi, the mandatory teaching of Greek and Turkish for students of both communities is proposed, argued to be fundamental for reunification. Rejecting the employment of alternative languages, such as English, as an adequate solution, its author clarified that:

> It is obvious that if we want to have a common federal state in the future, the citizens of this state must be able to communicate with each other. It is a matter of political decision and common will that Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriots should be taught each other's language. After all, language itself carries within it, cultural elements which can bring the two communities even closer and contribute to rapprochement and understanding (Papageorgiou 2009: 5).

Similarly, in a statement released by the pro-reunification group ‘United Cyprus Platform’ commenting on the new school year, a similar demand is raised, arguing that bilingualism

[59] The protests largely took place at a period when crossing across the buffer zone’s checkpoints was severely restricted due to covid-19 regulations, practically blocking interaction between the two sides.

should become mandatory in public schools, in addition to being gradually incorporated as a requirement for future employment in the public sector:

> The factor of "language" is tremendously important for the promotion and encouragement of communication between the two communities in the future, but also for the functionality of the agreed solution plan. Therefore a) fundamental knowledge of Greek and Turkish must be offered as part of mandatory teaching to all gymnasium and lyceum students on both sides b) public servants should be encouraged to learn the language of the other community at least for the purposes of basic communication and c) the certified knowledge of the language of the other community, even on a minimal level, should become a necessary prerequisite to be employed in the public sector (United Cyprus 2010: 3).

In another, critical article, titled 'The School Towards the Road for a Bi-Communal Cyprus' and published in issue 16 of Kalemi, the lack of Turkish Cypriot representation in the curriculum of Greek Cypriot public education is connected with the absence of a policy promoting bilingualism, as well as the lack of acknowledgment regarding the constitutional status of Turkish:

> [The students] do not learn and are not educated at all on a very simple thing: that Cypriots are often not only Greek Cypriots [...] Many students do not know that the Turkish language is an official language of the Republic of Cyprus, as I imagine, many teachers also do not. […] [We] suggest the promotion of learning the language of the other community through specific supportive measures, as is, for example, the reminding that both languages are the languages of our people (Ahniotis 2011: 13).

Calls for the (mandatory) promotion of bilingualism are not common and have not received wide support in the Republic of Cyprus, while inter-communal bilingualism remains a marginal phenomenon, with English acting as the new lingua franca. The aforementioned views have not been located consistently across the collected data – they express a minority position on a topic that is seldom addressed directly in the politics surrounding the Cyprus Dispute, as formal bilingualism is assumed to be actively reinstated, at least for Modern Standard Greek and Modern Turkish, in any potential federal reunification. Nonetheless, taken as the more vocal expressions of a bi-communal understanding of language, the intersection of language use, state policy, and reunification, highlight the centrality which language can acquire within the political and symbolic fields of the Republic.

6.4. Cypriotness as Linguistic Pluralism

Bi-communalism was the most prevalent position identified in collected documents and participants' responses, in relation to matters of language. Nonetheless, another perspective was also identified, which placed emphasis on linguistic pluralism, by stressing the multiplicity of languages in Cyprus without prioritizing Cypriot Greek and Cypriot Turkish. This perspective is reflected in the following response, given by Artemis, a Greek Cypriot woman in her 30s. Answering in written Cypriot Greek, Artemis also placed language at the centre of her self-identification, commenting that:

> I describe myself as a Greek Cypriot because my mother tongue is Cypriot Greek, and I was raised in the southern section of the island. I consider it unfair to the other communities to equate everyone with a single identity of the Cypriot, as different identities represent the present situation, different experiences, living difficulties, rights to movement etc (Artemis, Greek Cypriot, Female).

Artemis' response follows a similar pattern to other responses. The local language variety is claimed as a native language, indicating that Modern Standard Greek is understood by her as a separate, second language. Despite describing herself as "Greek Cypriot", the meaning attached to the term is oppositional to Greek Cypriot nationalist perspectives, as the ethnic prefix is here employed to facilitate an understanding of a multicommunal Cyprus, by assigning to the term 'Cypriot' a multiplicity of ethnic backgrounds, meanings, and experiences, placing Greek Cypriots as merely one of many communities subsumed under the term. Nonetheless, as she further clarified:

> Cypriot identity is equal to language (and halloumi).[60] And precisely because in Cyprus, Cypriot is not a single language but many (Cypriot Turkish, Cypriot Greek, Maronite language of Cyprus, Cypriot Armenian, perhaps others that I have no knowledge of), then the identity of the Cypriot is an umbrella for anyone who want to place her/himself under (Artemis, Greek Cypriot, Female).

Language is here again employed as a central marker for claiming a Cypriot identity. However, it is envisioned as a linguistic plurality, in contrast to bi-communal perspectives,

[60] Halloumi is a traditional cheese widely eaten on the island; a common food that remains undisputed in Cyprus as characteristically Cypriot. Its mentioning within this context thus has the effect of connecting Cypriot identity with linguistic plurality as a simple matter of fact.

which prioritize two specific language varieties over others. Individuals from the island's various communities can thus claim their common belonging under the broader category of the 'Cypriot', because of their cultural heterogeneity, rather than despite of it, since Cypriotness itself is associated with such a plurality; and is claimed to be reflected in it. This position is more closely associated with extra-parliamentary anti-authoritarian perspectives, which give emphasis to cultural plurality when ascribing meaning to Cypriot identity; as a means for identification and self-definition (Pastellopoulos 2018: 80).

Issue 9 of the anti-authoritarian magazine Entropia, published in 2016, directly reflects this point of view. Having the theme 'Language and Education' written on its cover in Cypriot Greek, the texts assembled address various aspects of language use in Cyprus, including, but not limited to, the intersection of power and language (Panagiotidis 2016), the construction of Cypriotness through writing in street art (Vasiliou 2016), the existence of the Cypriot sign language (Hajipetrou 2016), the publication of the first bi-communal dictionary (Hajipieris & Kabatas 2016), the variety of Cypriot Greek still spoken by some Turkish Cypriots (Ioannidou 2016), and Sanna, the Cypriot Maronite Arabic language variety (Pavlou 2016). The selection of texts portrays an image of linguistic heterogeneity, in contrast to mono-communal and bi-communal perspectives, and the issue attempts to represent as many language varieties as possible, without ranking them in any order of symbolic importance.

The introductory text, titled 'Language and Politics: Notes Regarding the Relation Between Power and the Language Varieties in Cyprus', begins by discussing the linguistic plurality found on the island, noting the formal use of Turkish and Greek, the predominance of English as a lingua franca, the Armenian, Maronite Arabic, Cypriot Greek and Cypriot Turkish language varieties, and the numerous diverse languages spoken by migrants (Panagiotidis 2016: 4). It moves on to examine the status associated with different language varieties, particularly in relation to codified Greek and Turkish, noting how language is utilized to signify class, educational level, and national identity, concluding by arguing that:

> For official use, the Greek Cypriot community has chosen the common modern Greek variety, while the Turkish Cypriot community has chosen the Turkish of Turkey. This was done for rather obvious political reasons (convergence of the communities with the "motherlands"), national (identification of the communities with the "rest" of Greeks and Turks), historical, social, cultural, and practical reasons. [...] However, this choice on the part of the two communities has ended up entailing the oppression

> and sidelining of the local dialects. It should be noted, however, that the adoption of one variety as official, does not imply the automatic marginalisation of local dialects: what is happening in Cyprus is the result of political choice and not an inevitable event. [...] More generally, the oppression and discarding of local dialects in Cyprus is the result of the systematic and tireless practice of nationalist circles (and, to a lesser extent, of the English-educated elites):
>
> i. To monopolize the definition of identity for Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots respectively.
> ii. To define and limit the identity of the two communities to singular signifiers, with the following schema of linguistic use as a starting point: Common Greek/Turkish: Greek/Turkish national consciousness, Dialect (or English): "Cypriot" national consciousness.
> iii. To perpetuate and sustain through the education system the nationalist circles themselves (and, to a lesser extent, the English-educated elites) (Panagiotidis 2016: 5).

On one side, therefore, lie the politics of nationalism, which attempt to impose linguistic homogeneity for the purpose of entrenching fixed, antagonistic national self-identifications, while on the other lies the existing linguistic pluralism, opening possibilities of challenging nationalist influence and the primacy of national identities themselves. The subsequent texts follow a similar argumentation, contextualized within their own topic of discussion. For example, the article exploring the use of Cypriot Greek in street art, titled ‘Towards the Making of a Cypriotness: The Example of Writing in Street Art’, emphasizes the intersection of language with (national) identity, noting again the formal imposition of Modern Standard Greek, as well as the shifts of self-identification from ‘Greek’/’Turk’ to ‘Greek Cypriot’/’Turkish Cypriot’ and finally, to ‘Cypriot’ without an ethnic prefix (Vasiliou 2016: 9). Nonetheless, the article opposes the replacement of Modern Standard Greek with the Cypriot Greek variety, as such a change would again merely reproduce the imposition of one language variety over the others. Instead, it is argued that:

> Cypriot [Kypriaka] is a minor language in relation to the dominant Greek which is the major one; and the only way of resistance for a minority language is not to support its recognition as equal to other languages, but to project its differentiation as its constituent element. In other words, the use of Cypriot in art, at the university, on the

> walls, constitutes a micro-politics of resistance, while at the same time these resistances work towards a becoming that unites many different elements. In the case of Cyprus, if we are to imagine an imposition of Cypriot, this would potentially reduce the power of Turkish Cypriot or Maronite Arabic Cypriot. Therefore, what is important in our analysis is to give space to these many different elements and to accept the formation they create (Vasiliou 2016: 9).

This formation is envisioned as a potentially non-essentialized Cypriot identity, constituted through the claimed micro-politics of resistance, which "open the way to the invocation of a Cypriotness" (Vasiliou 2016: 9). Thus, like in Artemis' response, Cypriotness is equated with linguistic pluralism, where no local language variety should enjoy a primacy over the others, enabling their reproduction via their differentiation from the formal, dominant language varieties, fracturing the homogenizing logic of dominant national identifications.

Other articles lay their emphasis on representing language varieties that receive little to no recognition within broader society. The article on Sanna, titled 'Language Policy: Cypriot Maronite Arabic and its Comparison to Cypriot Greek', focuses on the damaging effects that educational policy has had on the Cypriot Arabic language variety, eroding its capacity for reproduction by removing it from the classroom, leading to a diminishing number of speakers and the possibility of its extinction (Pavlou 2016: 12). The article on the Cypriot sign language, titled 'The Sign Language', aims to bring to attention the existence of a codified sign language particular to the island, employed daily by "the community of deaf people in Cyprus" (Hajipetrou 2016: 16), while the article on the variety of Cypriot Greek still spoken by a minority of Turkish Cypriots, titled 'The Romaika of Turkish Cypriots: An Analysis of a Variety and a Description of a Community Lost in Time', aims to present a first accessible documentation of Greek-speaking Turkish Cypriots, as a dispersed linguistic community (Ioannidou 2016: 17). These three articles are indicative of the broader pluralistic schema, where a language variety is appreciated and represented, regardless of being formally codified, recognized, or having a significant number of speakers.

The article focusing on the publication of the first bi-communal dictionary, titled 'Common Dictionary of the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot Dialect' and written by its editors, is perhaps the only text in the issue standing out, reflecting a more bi-communal perspective instead. The article outlines the dictionary's central aim, which is "to preserve the specific, but also common linguistic culture of years of cohabitation between Greek Cypriots and

Turkish Cypriots", followed by a discussion arguing that "the various linguistic mutual borrowings, which appear in the Dictionary, [project], beyond linguistic richness, the possibility of language to transcend any differences between the two communities" (Hajipieris & Kabatas 2016: 6). The article further discusses how language acts as "the most important connecting link between peoples who might present religious or ethnic differences", stressing that "common vocabulary is the most powerful product of cultural cohabitation and cultural intersection spanning four centuries in the Eastern Mediterranean" (Hajipieris & Kabatas 2016: 6). The representation of language in Cyprus is here undeniably bi-communal. Nonetheless, the inclusion of this discussion alongside the broader selection of texts, enriches, rather than diminishes the pluralistic perspective articulated, as Cypriot Greek and Cypriot Turkish are presented alongside all other language varieties, and therefore, as linguistic specificities, rather than the only, or main linguistic alternatives.

6.5. Concluding Remarks

Cypriotist positions evoke linguistic differentiation to highlight fundamental dissimilarities between Cyprus and Greece and Turkey, representing the island as an autonomous cultural entity, divorced from broader nationalist narratives aiming to subsume it, in part or as a whole, under the Greek or the Turkish nation. These positions can be further subdivided into a bi-communal and a pluralistic perspective. The first emphasizes bi-communality, by prioritizing two language varieties, Cypriot Greek and Cypriot Turkish, over others, while maintaining, at the same time, a symbolic representation of equal stature for both, reflecting broader symbolic and structural elements connected with political bi-communalism. The second, being less widespread, implicitly rejects this prioritization, emphasizing the broader linguistic pluralism existing on the island, by incorporating in its representation a diverse array of language varieties, with no clear prioritization of one over the other.

Both positions, however, maintain a similar pattern in the particular language varieties chosen to be evoked. In both bi-communal and pluralistic positions, the varieties identified and represented are those typically associated with population groups commonly accepted as native, and, with the exception of the Cypriot sign language, correspond to communities codified within the original constitution of the Republic of Cyprus – the Greek, Turkish,

Maronite and Armenian Cypriot communities.[61] Thus, both bi-communal and pluralistic positions place limits to Cypriot identity, to the extent that language is evoked as a marker of this identity, sketching a national imagined community, spatially and ancestrally – spatially, because all language varieties evoked as markers of a Cypriot identity are particular to the island, and ancestrally, because they are linked to historical ethnic/cultural communities already codified politically within legal structures. Thus, Sanna, a language variety spoken by less than two thousand individuals (Bielenberg & Constantinou 2010: 4), is identified as inherently Cypriot, while Romanian, Levantine Arabic, Bulgarian, Filipino and Russian, spoken by admittedly far more individuals currently living on the island, are not (CIA 2022). What we are here observing are particular language ideologies, "morally and politically loaded representations of the nature, structure, and use of languages in a social world" (Woolard 2020: 1).

Thus, the bi-communal and pluralistic positions both entail an imagined community which places restrictions both externally and internally. Externally, this mode of linguistic imagination excludes the Greek and Turkish 'motherlands', divorcing the island from any national identification beyond its territory, while internally, it excludes non-native populations, at the very same moment as it attempts to consolidate a common Cypriot identity, transcending historical inter-ethnic conflicts between the various Cypriot communities. As highlighted in the previous chapter, these exclusions are not openly articulated, but are nonetheless notably reflected in the absences of representation running through Cypriotist discourse, which prioritise specific demographic, and in this case linguistic groups, in relation to Cypriotness, while downgrading or ignoring others. Having explored in this chapter the ways in which the claiming of distinct language varieties as identity markers of Cypriotness demarcate lines of inclusion and exclusion, the following chapter will focus on narration, exploring how Cypriotness is situated in historical time through the resignification of past figures and events, as well as how historical narratives dominant in the Greek Cypriot community are challenged by Cypriotist re-narration.

[61] The Latin (Catholic) community has no language variety specifically identified with it.

7. Challenging Dominant Narration

Drawing on collected documents and participants' responses, this chapter presents the narratives of Cypriot history as they are put forth by Cypriotist counter-cultures seeking to challenge hegemonic Greek Cypriot narrations. Utilising the available literature surrounding narration in Cyprus, the chapter begins with the presentation of historical narratives dominant in Greek Cypriot society, focusing primarily on historical narration in public education. Following the outlining of the key historical claims and representations present in dominant Greek Cypriot narration, it briefly outlines the key alternative narrative present in Greek Cypriot society, which has been historically connected with the parliamentary left.

The chapter moves on to examine identified alternative narrations, discussing two distinct alternative narratives located in the collected data. The first narrative presents a series of alternative historicities surrounding the identity of the island, contesting representations that view Cyprus as a historically Hellenic space, disturbing the image of a linear Hellenic identity. This is accomplished primarily by producing alternative genealogies, which place Cypriotness in historical time through the identification and reinterpretation of past historical events and figures. By historicising Cypriotness, a political genealogy parallel to, and alternative from the narration offered by Greek Cypriot nationalism is articulated, contradicting key fundamental claims of dominant Greek Cypriot historical narration.

The second distinct narrative provides an alternative narration over victimhood and historical responsibility, challenging the exclusive assigning of victimhood to Greek Cypriots, as well as the exoneration of the community from having any responsibility for the unfoldment of the conflict. This is primarily achieved through the highlighting of the suffering experienced by the Turkish Cypriot community, and the recognition of the Turkish Cypriots killed or missing during the 1960s and 1970s as fellow victims of the conflict. As the recognition of Turkish Cypriot victims presupposes the existence of perpetuators, these alternative narratives disturb notions of exclusive victimhood, highlighting the historical violence exerted by Greek Cypriot perpetuators on Turkish Cypriots. This narration is further enriched through the highlighting of political violence internal to the Greek Cypriot community during the 1950s, complicating the representation of Greek Cypriot national unity, as well as challenging the heroism attached to Greek Cypriot nationalist fighters in dominant narration.

7.1. Official Historical Narration in the Republic of Cyprus

As Étienne Balibar has argued, the "history of nations…is always already presented to us in the form of a narrative which attributes to these entities the continuity of a subject" (1990: 338). It should be of no surprise that this is also the case in the Republic of Cyprus, where dominant interpretations of history have been codified into a broader historical narrative presenting Cyprus as a Hellenic cultural, historical, and political space. Nonetheless, the dominant narratives found in the Republic entail a certain complexity, as they attempt, at the same time, to signify Cyprus as a historically Hellenic space, while legitimising, in parallel, the existence of an independent Cypriot state. While elements of dominant historical narration can be located at various levels in Greek Cypriot society, including museums (Papadakis 1994) and the commemoration of anniversaries (Papadakis 2003: 258), a more central role is played by public education, as it is the sphere within which the vast majority of Greek Cypriots have been exposed to dominant narratives of history. The references made in participants' responses presented in this chapter to historical narratives taught in public education, are indicative of the lasting impression and effect that these narratives continue to have in Greek Cypriot society.

Within the official school curriculum, Cypriot history is largely subsumed under the history of Greece and is therefore typically allocated less teaching time (Papadakis 2008: 131). Historical narration in public education situates the origin of Cypriot settlement to the ancient Greek colonisation of Cyprus during antiquity, which is presented as a pivotal, transformative event, leading to the Hellenization of the island (Calleja 2008: 54). Cyprus is subsequently presented as a Greek island falling under the control of a series of foreign powers, maintaining however an unbroken Hellenic continuity from antiquity to the present day (Perikleous et al. 2021: 128). The superiority of the Greek nation in relation to other national groups is consistently emphasized, painting an image of a cultured and civilised national self (Charalambous 2007: 159).

The word 'Cypriot' is repeatedly used in the official school curriculum to refer exclusively to the Greek Cypriot population, creating the image of Cypriot-as-Greek (Pastellopoulos 2018: 48), while Turkish Cypriots are often referred to simply as 'Turks' and are thus subsumed under the broader Turkish nation, which is presented as "bloodthirsty, hostile and barbaric" (Papadakis 2008: 133-134). In contrast, Greek Cypriots are represented in the school curriculum as an integral part of the Greek nation and attributed positive connotations,

constructing an image of the national self as “moral and honest members that today, like in the past, aim for the implementation of their just demands” (Charalambous 2007: 213). The aim for union with Greece (enosis), which emerged during the British colonial period, is presented as part of these just demands, while the activity of EOKA (National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters), the Greek Cypriot nationalist armed group which waged a pro-enosis, anti-British guerrilla campaign during the 1950s, is presented as its most epic, heroic expression (Socratous 2016: 291-292). In contrast, Turkish Cypriots are primarily represented as obstructors to its materialisation, with no reference or recognition over the reasons surrounding Turkish Cypriot opposition to enosis (Charalambous 2007: 207).

In contemporary commemorations of EOKA, the aim of enosis is downplayed, with its campaign represented as a struggle for freedom, leading to the island’s independence in 1960, linking the establishment of an independent state to the Greek Cypriot community (Papadakis 2003: 260, Papadakis 2010: 63). The inter-communal violence of the 1960s and the events of 1974 are explained by assigning responsibility to actors other than the Greek Cypriot community, primarily Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot community (Charalambous 2007: 257). As responsibility for the events of 1963 and 1974 is externalised, the political legitimacy of the post-1964 Republic of Cyprus, which saw the Greek Cypriot community de-facto taking over control of the state, is further established (Philippou & Varnava 2009: 201). Another important dimension characterising dominant narration in public schools is the highlighting of Greek Cypriot victims during the Turkish invasion of 1974, with no recognition provided for the existence of Turkish Cypriot victims (Charalambous 2007: 257).

What emerges is thus a narrative placing Cyprus within an imagined Hellenic topography throughout history, prioritising Greek Cypriots as the genuine historical inhabitants of the island resisting against foreign intervention and occupation. Turks, a category which includes Turkish Cypriots within narratives located in public education, are constructed as the national Other of Greek Cypriots (Charalambous 2007: 257-258), while responsibility for the inter-communal conflict and the events of 1974 is solely assigned to actors external to the community, legitimising the community’s political stance, claims over the state and historical political demands (Charalambous 2007: 256-257).

The main alternative to the dominant Greek Cypriot historical narration originates in the political left and has been consistently promoted by the Progressive Party of Working People (AKEL) following the de-facto partition of the island in 1974 (Papadakis 2003: 261).

AKEL's narrative stresses the historical peaceful co-existence between the two ethnic communities, viewing Turkish Cypriots as fellow co-islanders that are distinct from mainland Turks (Papadakis 2003: 262). The narrative further highlights the killing of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leftists by ultra-nationalists during the 1950s and the 1960s, assigning responsibility for the suffering experienced by both communities to Greece and Turkey, as well as to Cypriot right-wing extremists (Papadakis 2003: 262).

In contrast, the narratives emerging from the collected data do not directly correspond to dominant Greek Cypriot nationalist narration, or to the mainstream left-wing alternative that has crystalised in the Republic of Cyprus. Rather, they represent an alternative narration which directly rejects a series of key claims concentrated in official narration, disturbing hegemonic readings of history. These narratives include the formulation of alternative genealogies identifying Cypriotness in history, opposing the representation of Greek Cypriots as the exclusive victims of the Cyprus Dispute, and the further assigning of responsibility to the Greek Cypriot community for the development of the conflict during the 20th century.

7.2. Alternative Historicities and Cypriotness

The first set of narratives identifiable in the collected data provide an alternative historical genealogy of identity on the island, by disturbing representations of a continuous, unbroken Hellenic identity attached to Cyprus. While these narratives do not focus on the same historical periods, events, or individuals, they share a similar pattern of representation, as they emphasise a set of alternative historicities that contradict dominant historical narration by claiming the presence of Cypriotness in historical space. For example, in an article published in 2001 in issue 29 of Eks Iparhis titled 'History is for Sale', narrations that emphasise ancient Greek colonisation as the beginning of proper Cypriot history, are directly disputed. The article begins by referring to specific Turkish Cypriot leftists who publicly stated that Cypriot history spans 9000 years. Taking this as its starting point of discussion, the article rhetorically questions why Greek Cypriots do not acknowledge the same historicity for the island, arguing that:

> The nine thousand years of Cypriot history are confirmed by the remains of Khirokitia[.][62] Someone could very well ask: If the history of 7000 B.C. which is signified by the remains of Khirokitia is not ours, then to whom does it belong? Is it possible that 6000 years of history have gone astray, and are looking for their owner? […] If some people can feel pride for monuments and buildings of only a hundred years old, why can't we, Greek Cypriots, be proud for a 9000-year-old history? […] Here the question needs to be asked: Do we want to sell out a history of 6000 years, which preceded [ancient Greek] Achaean colonisation? (Pagiatas 2001: 24).

The claiming of an ancient history preceding the arrival of ancient Greek civilisation directly disputes the most fundamental claim of Greek Cypriot nationalism, that of an uninterrupted Hellenic historical continuity from antiquity to the present day. The emphasis on; and claiming of 6000 years of history preceding the arrival of ancient Greeks in Cyprus, signified in the article by the reference to Khirokitia, formulates an alternative genealogy over the character of the island and its inhabitants, unburdened by claims over the historical continuity of a homogenised Hellenic subject. This is more directly reflected in the concluding remarks of the article, which directly dispute dominant historical narratives:

> National purity is a myth and cannot be found anywhere, since the history of a people is synthesised through slavery, conquests, conflicts, admixtures, colonisations and cultural interactions. […] The history of our country is synthesised by the communities, which at some moments clashed and other moments came together, and today constitute the Cypriot people. Even the various conquerors have left, like elsewhere, their tracks, and of course, the Greeks colonised Cyprus and have left us with the contemporary culture of Greek Cypriots. This is a history that, despite our present cultural image, does not differ significantly from that of other peoples of the Mediterranean or the Middle East (Pagiatas 2001: 25).

Thus, 'national purity' is discursively disconnected from the concept of a 'Cypriot people', with the reformulated historical narrative no longer privileging ancient Greece as the starting point of Cypriot history. Ancient Greek colonisation therefore merely becomes yet another instance in a series of "conquests, conflicts, admixtures, colonisations and cultural interactions", rather than a pivotal historical event, contributing to the broader process of

[62] Khirokitia is an important archaeological site located in the Larnaca district, dating back to the Neolithic period.

synthesisation which is argued to have shaped the contemporary Cypriot communities, which constitute the broader category of the 'Cypriot people'. The claiming of a history prior to ancient Greek colonisation is therefore equated with the claim to an autochthonous Cypriot population that is irreducible to a notion of a pure, homogenised (Hellenic) nation.

Most texts, however, avoid delving into discussing antiquity, focusing primarily on the modern historical period, often emphasising sidelined historical moments by producing reinterpretations of past historical events. A notable example is an article published in 2000 in issue 13 of Eks Iparhis, titled 'The 1940s and Diaskeptiki: A Lost Opportunity, or an Adventurous Birth?', which offers an alternative interpretation of the Diaskeptiki conference of 1947-48, that took place during the British colonial period. The conference was initiated by the colonial administration, which invited representatives of Cypriot civic society to negotiate the introduction of an internal constitution, aiming to offer limited self-governance to the island-colony (Katsourides 2014a: 39). The British initiative took place during a period of heated conflict between the Cypriot political left and right, as the political left, through the (then) newly formed AKEL party, was challenging the hegemony of the right in Cypriot political life, and over the anti-colonial struggle itself (Alecou 2016: 59, Kalantzopoulos 2018: 125).

Fearing that the introduction of democratic structures would further accelerate the ascent of AKEL, the Greek Cypriot right, alongside the Church, boycotted the conference, refusing to discuss any arrangement other than that of immediate union (enosis) of the island with Greece (Alecou 2016: 62). In contrast, the Greek Cypriot left participated in the conference, officially supporting self-governance as a desirable steppingstone to enosis (Katsourides 2014b: 485). Turkish Cypriot nationalist representatives also participated, requesting communal representation in potential political structures (Alecou 2016: 68). Nonetheless, the refusal of the colonial administration to accept AKEL's demands for the introduction of extended political rights, contributed, alongside the boycott, to the eventual collapse of the conference (Kalantzopoulos 2018: 125). Following the failure of Diaskeptiki, AKEL entered a period of internal turmoil, which eventually led to the abandonment of its support for self-governance as a steppingstone to enosis, shifting its official position to the demand for immediate enosis (Alecou 2016: 123). The article published in issue 13 of Eks Iparhis discusses in detail the events surrounding the Diaskeptiki conference, moving on to argue in its concluding remarks that:

> The Diaskeptiki conference is worth being recognized for what it is: It is the first moment that the Cypriots were negotiating with the colonialists, not for a law, or some concession, but for the destiny of the place and of society itself. Despite the complexes of unionism,[63] it was an important moment of a political coming of age[.] […] There are here clear messages from the future. A far-right that is sharpening its knives to the tempo of genocide in the Balkans, asking for the killing of leftists. A national Turkish Cypriot elite which asks for foreign protection, access to power, the right of veto to protect itself, or, in the worst-case scenario, partition. A left which tries since then to maintain the bi-communal movement of the popular masses, marching towards the logic that will crystalise, years later, with the slogan "Cyprus belongs to its people" (Panayiotou 2000: 54).

The Diaskeptiki conference is largely forgotten and underrepresented in official narratives, which prioritise and emphasise the 1950s when discussing the period of British colonialism. In contrast, Diaskeptiki is here re-signified as a central historical event, both in relation to the anti-colonial struggle, as well as to the crystallisation of the political dynamics which subsequently emerge. Nonetheless, and perhaps more importantly, it is the association of the events surrounding the conference with the subsequent historical emergence of a left-wing Cypriotist perspective that is worth highlighting. In the article, the 1940s are re-signified as the historical period within which a crystallisation of Cypriotness is codified as a political position. The reinterpretation of Diaskeptiki therefore produces a historicity of Cypriotism as a local political tradition, accompanied with its own pivotal moment in history, represented as a "first moment" of Cypriot collective resistance against British colonialism.

A similar process can be identified in a two-part article arguing that Cyprocentrism[64] can be identified in the public discourse produced by Adam Adamantos during the 1940s (Panayiotou 2001a, Panayiotou 2001b).[65] Adamantos was the mayor of Famagusta, a popular

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[63] The text appears to refer here to the position of immediate enosis.

[64] As it has been pointed out in chapter 2, the terms 'Cyprocentrism', 'Cypriotism' and 'Cypriot consciousness' have been used at different periods to describe similar or identical phenomena.

[65] Both the previous article (Panayiotou 2000) and this article (Panayiotou 2001a, Panayiotou 2001b) were written by the same individual. The articles were specifically chosen for analysis due to their length, which make them particularly suitable for a detailed examination. While the pattern of historical reinterpretation characterizing them has been consistently reflected throughout the collected documents, it should be pointed out that since Cypriotist narratives have not been codified in a consistent fashion, the specificities of their reinterpretation, such as the particular events and individuals they focus on, may not be reflected in every expression of Cypriotist re-narration. It is the

leftist orator who opposed AKEL's official abandonment for self-governance as a steppingstone to enosis, and subsequent support for immediate union with Greece without any intermediate stages, a position that converged with the demands of the political right (Alecou 2016: 68). The article begins with a clarification over the reasons leading to the decision of focusing on Adamantos:

> Even though he disagreed with the leadership of AKEL during the 1950s, his consistent position in favour of self-governance after 1947-48 (which can be considered, historically, as an early form of a "Cypriot consciousness"), makes him an important actor; in the analysis of the public expression of Cyprocentrism. […] To the extent that the speaker is a popular orator, his speeches represent moments of collective expression. The appearance, during the 1960s, of a Cypriot consciousness, cannot be the result of a magical transformation in a period of five years (1959-64). There were currents under the surface of official rhetoric, and during the 1940s, despite the dominance of nationalism, these currents began to gain a public voice (Panayiotou 2001a: 56).

The equation of 'self-governance' with 'Cypriot consciousness' acts as the analytical lens through which Adamantos is claimed as an expressor of Cyprocentrism during the 1940s.[66] Thus, Adamantos' insistence on supporting the previous position for 'self-governance' is interpreted as a growing opposition to the idea of enosis, which is argued to reflect, through the public speeches of Adamantos, a growing opposition to enosis from a section of Greek Cypriot society. The article follows a detailed examination of Adamantos' public speeches, in which he is shown to increasingly differentiate between Greece and the Greek government, on the one hand, and Greeks and Cypriots, on the other. These shifts in Adamantos' rhetoric are discussed in relation to the developments of the Greek civil war (1943-49), which eventually saw the Greek leftist forces losing, leading to Greek communist party members,

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utilization of alternative historicities, that place Cypriotness in historical time, rather than the particularities of those historicities, that is the focus of our analysis.

[66] It is perhaps worth clarifying that the interpretation presented in the article does not correspond to the existing academic consensus surrounding Cypriot history, as the demand for self-governance by the Greek Cypriot left during the 1940s was always accompanied by a parallel demand for enosis, while formally, AKEL continued to support enosis until the 1960s (Leventis 2001: 76, Charalambous 2012: 155, Ktoris 2013: 18, Katsourides 2014b: 485, Kalantzopoulos 2018: 129). This is noted here to highlight the extent to which the interpretation is rooted within an alternative meta-narration, rather than additional empirical information.

supporters and fighters being exiled, imprisoned, and persecuted. Thus, in its conclusion, the article argues that:

> In essence, the defeat of the Greek left signified the "death" of the Greece with which the [Cypriot] left identified with; in the first years of the 1940s, and the permanent shift (even with a slow pace) of the left towards Cyprocentrism. And this turn was finalised of course in the 1960s, after the declaration of independence. Adamantos is considered today a prophetic voice that was looking into the future (Panayiotou 2001b: 49).

The focus of both articles on the 1940s is not coincidental, as the decade of the 1950s is dominated historically by the activity of EOKA, the hegemony of the political right and the demand for immediate enosis, represented in official narratives as the most heroic and epic moment of the Cypriot anti-colonial movement (Socratous 2016: 291-292). In contrast, the 1940s, which are sidelined in official narration, are characterised by an emerging left-wing social movement, centred around the AKEL party, as well as alternative demands and strategies for the achievement of enosis, including peaceful, rather than violent modes of action, trade union mobilisations, and the claiming of political rights. The demand for self-governance, which was evoked during the period as a steppingstone to enosis (Kalantzopoulos 2018: 125), is here reinterpreted as an expression of a political Cypriotness paving the way towards independence, rather than as an alternative strategy towards union with Greece.

The challenge to official narration is here two-fold. On the one hand, the representation of the 1940s as a turn towards a Cypriotist mode of identification, reinterpreted as a foreshadowing of independence, rather than enosis, disturbs the official Greek Cypriot narrative, which argues that demand for enosis was consistent and unchanging throughout the period of British colonialism and therefore, ethically and politically justified. On the other hand, these reinterpretations provide Cypriotism with a historicity, accompanied by its key historical moments and figures, producing an alternative political genealogy with which contemporary claims to identity can be contextualised and identified with, in opposition to Greek Cypriot nationalist historical claims. These events and figures are neither limited to the 1940s nor to Greek Cypriots alone. Various Turkish Cypriot leftists are also referred to throughout the data (Pagiatas 2003: 5, Panayiotou 2004: 5), reflecting broader themes surrounding bi-communalism that have been outlined in previous chapters, while additional historical events,

such as the 1960 Cypriot declaration of independence (Anon 1999c: 22, Papadakis 1999: 24), or the opening of internal checkpoints in 2003 (Anon 2010c, Hadjimichael 2017: 5), are occasionally highlighted as historically pivotal events. Nonetheless, despite the variety of individuals and events emphasised throughout the collected documents, the two-fold challenge they present to official narration remains the same.

The presentation of alternative historicities is also occasionally accomplished through the republication of texts from past historical periods, re-signifying them with new meaning by presenting them through a particular lens. A notable example originates in issue 11 of the anti-authoritarian Entropia magazine, published in 2017, which includes a reprint of the manifesto of the Communist Party of Cyprus (CPC), originally published in the 1920s. The CPC, which was the first left-wing political party established on the island, opposed enosis, supporting independence instead, while in parallel promoting inter-communal collaboration based upon its Marxist-Leninist interpretation of working-class internationalism (Katsourides 2014a: 36-37).[67] In the magazine, the manifesto is introduced through the following accompanied introductory text:

> We are republishing here the Manifesto of the Communist Party of Cyprus, as part of the bi-communal celebration of May Day.[68] The Communist Party of Cyprus was the only political party that stood against the demand for 'Self-determination, Enosis' and in support for 'Self-governance, Independence', during the period 1925-1950 (Anon 2017a: 44).

The manifesto chosen to be reprinted in fact makes no reference to either the demand for independence, or to the two ethnic communities. Instead, it reflects a common communist internationalist position of the 1920s, calling for the local workers to stand in solidarity with the proletariat class across the globe, regardless of race or religion, prioritising class interests and class identity over competing senses of identity, including those expressed by nationalism. Interestingly, while the manifesto is reprinted as a commemoration of May Day, no reference is made in the introductory text to the class struggles of the period, of which the

[67] Although AKEL (1941-present) is typically presented as the natural continuation of the Communist Party of Cyprus (1926-44), their historical relation is more complex. For an interesting discussion, see Sakellaropoulos and Alecou (2019).

[68] Following the opening of checkpoints in 2003, left-wing Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot trade unions and organisations began to celebrate May Day together at the Ledra Palace checkpoint in Nicosia, as a symbolic gesture signifying their support for the island's reunification.

manifesto is itself a product. Rather, it is the party's stance against enosis that is highlighted, despite being absent from the manifesto itself, rather than the Marxist-Leninist class politics articulated in its content. The effect is to disassociate the party from its historically-situated ideological position, re-signifying it as a historical predecessor of the contemporary bi-communal, pro-reunification politics of Cyprus.

Another example is the reprint of a speech discussing Cypriot consciousness given in 1988 by leftist activist Costis Ahniotis, which was published in the same issue of Entropia.[69] The text of the speech was originally published in the leftist magazine Entos ton Teihon (Within the Walls) in 1988, in which Ahniotis worked as an editor (Ahniotis 1988: 12). Discussing Cypriot consciousness from the perspective of the 1980s, a period during which inter-communal interactions were severely limited, the text begins by explaining that:

> For the purposes of this text, I refer to Cypriot Consciousness as the consciousness of Cypriot Independence. Its carriers are all Cypriots who believe in Independence, that is, those who perceive Cyprus and its people as an independent entity and thus seek to preserve the corresponding political institution, that of the Independent Cypriot State (Ahniotis 2017: 20).

Defining 'Cypriot consciousness' in these terms, the text moves on to quote anti-enosis articles of the Communist Party of Cyprus and the Trotskyist Party of Cyprus,[70] offering a historicization of the position in support of independence and noting the more favourable perspective these parties held towards the Turkish Cypriot community, moving on to argue that:

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[69] Costis Ahniotis (1952-2017) was an important figure in the extra-parliamentary leftist circles of Cyprus and issue 11 of Entropia was also dedicated to his memory. An editor of various leftist political magazines, he remained active in grassroots Cypriot pro-reunification politics throughout his adult life (Cyprus Movements Archive 2020). His funeral in 2017 was politically charged, marked by the carrying of pro-reunification banners, the making of speeches and the singing of the Internationale. 'Tongue', a documentary focusing on his life, was released in 2019 by Andreas Anastasiades and Panayiotis Ahniotis, which has included various moments from the funeral (Ioannidou 2020).

[70] The Trotskyist Party of Cyprus was a political party active in the late 1940s. Following the formation of AKEL, which adopted enosis as its position, and the subsequent dissolution of the CPC, it remained the only political party which openly opposed enosis during the colonial period. The existence of the party has not been documented in either left-wing or right-wing historical narratives, nor has any attention been given to it in contemporary scholarship. For the few available primary sources relating to the party, see its entry in the Cyprus Movements Archive: https://movementsarchive.org/doku.php?id=el:groups:trotskystiko [Accessed: 30/10/22].

> In evaluating the decade of the 1950s, we can briefly state that the entire revolutionary potential of the Cypriot people, Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots, was wasted in order to marginalize the conscious participation of the working class. Building the inter-communal conflict provided neither self-governance, nor Enosis, but dependency.
>
> That is why Cypriot Consciousness is constantly a newly-born consciousness. It never overcame early infancy. As a result, its face is marked by the grief of old age, and the main emotion it can feel is the pain of uncertain existence. Cypriot Consciousness exists trampled between the feet of its adversaries, engaged in an endless body-to-body combat. From the height of the ground where it stands, it sees them as enormous giants. Despite the constant trampling, Cypriot Consciousness is saved only by the fact that none of these giants dominates completely. Otherwise, Cypriot Consciousness would have been lost. Cypriot Consciousness believes itself to be weak. That is why it plays dead, waiting for better days.
>
> Cypriot Consciousness is weak and humble. It knows this and does not enter the fight. It is sufficient for it to chuckle at the weakness of its much more powerful rivals, who nonetheless, are also unable to impose their own order of things. In its ears, their voices sound as mere rhetoric and fanfaronade.
>
> Cypriot Consciousness has the pride of the marginalized (Ahniotis 2017: 21).

This rather poetic piece of writing reflects the ideological claims of Cypriotism, representing it in a structural position of non-hegemony. Cypriotness is examined in opposition to its two "adversaries", Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism, with Cypriotness represented in a continuous state of marginality, unable to directly compete for hegemony. However, in engaging in a constant antagonism with each other, Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism are at the same time represented as a partial failure, remaining unable to completely dominate the ideological landscape, enabling Cypriotness to survive.

It is the claim to this survival, despite the influence of competing nationalist ideologies, which forms the key narrative of the text – through quotes originating from the Communist and Trotskyist parties of the colonial period, the presence and marginality of Cypriotness is situated in historical time, displaying the existence of a political history alternative to that offered by dominant nationalist narratives. The description of Cypriotness as "play[ing]

dead", rather than disappearing, implies its continuous presence as a mode of identification and as a critical political position, signifying both an alternative political past, but also, by "waiting for better days", the potentiality of an alternative future. Yet, since the text was written in 1988, its very reprinting in 2017 further adds to the historicization of Cypriotness, as the republication of the text in the 21st century codifies the very alternative historization it aimed to document and express when it was originally written in 1988. That is, the preservation and promotion of the text itself has become another example of the claim towards the historical existence of an alternative mode of identification.

Not all narrations focus on the reinterpretation of the political past. For example, in an article narrating a bi-communal student walking tour on both sides of the partitioned city of Nicosia, titled 'Bi-communal Walks in Our History' and published in issue 10 of Kalemi in 2009, the city is described in the following manner:

> Nicosia is a live museum, a large historical park. Büyük Han, the large, welcoming inn, which lived through glorious days until the 1960s, when, with the rise of the car, it gradually stopped being used, the Kyrenia Gate, the church of St. Luke, are just some of the historical monuments that we found on our way in the north part of the city. The checkpoint returns us to the bitter reality, just at the moment that our thoughts begin to fly. We cross on the other side again; the historical city is the same. The [Venetian] walls, determinant of its identity, the Gates, churches, and mosques. The Phaneromeni church and the small Araplar mosque, with the multiple architectural influences, that was once called Stavros tou Misirikou [Cross of Misirikou], the Taht-el-kale mosque and the beautiful Chrysaliniotissa church, in the neighbourhood that is still called Tahtakale. Today, the monuments co-exist in silence. They can co-exist, but humans in Cyprus still cannot. […] Let us show to our children Nicosia as a multicultural city, a city in which humans that were different lived together in the past, and can still live together in the future, without their differences meaning that they cannot be compatriots and friends. Nicosia is calling us (Mavrada 2009b: 5).

The partitioned city is represented in terms of familiarity and similarity across both sides of the divide, with the narrative focusing on the identified commonality of multiculturalism, reflected in the article by the consistent referencing of historical monuments and religious buildings, typically associated with each community. The representation of a Hellenic

homogenised past is thus directly disturbed, by highlighting the material existence of non-Hellenic culture in Cypriot history. Its very presence is evoked to create the image of a multicommunal past, around which an abstract, imagined multicultural society is formed, unburdened by the historically contextual religious, political, and social dynamics of the past. It is not the presence of the monuments and buildings themselves that forms this picture, but the interpretations attached to them, which transport unto the past a particular vision of the future – in this case, the desire for a politically reunified Cyprus where bi-communal co-existence becomes an entrenched everyday reality. As it has been noted in previous chapters, the absences located in a discourse are themselves characteristic of the broader imagination at play. The walled city of Nicosia was in 2009 largely inhabited by migrant workers of various cultural backgrounds, in both sides of the divide (Karathanasis 2017: 53-54, Ioannou 2019: 218-219).[71] Thus, while the text evokes historical multiculturalism, the contemporary, existing multiculturalism remains at the very same time unacknowledged, painting an image of bi-communal inclusivity, rather than a broader sense of multicultural belonging. Thus, the phrase "compatriots and friends" corresponds to this bi-communal imaginary, rather than to the contemporary multiculturality existing on each side of partitioned Nicosia.

Another alternative historicity is presented in a symbolic action which took place in April of 2017, involving the attachment of large stickers over the signs of roads and avenues in Nicosia, which were named after Georgios Grivas, the Greek Cypriot nationalist commander of EOKA.[72] The street signs named after him were replaced with the following names:

1. 'Savvas Menikos Street', a Greek Cypriot leftist accused of treason, who was publicly stoned to death in 1958 (Papadimitriou 2021: 99-101).
2. 'Victims of Kophinou Street', which refers to the 1967 military operation led by the National Guard[73] under Grivas' command, against the Turkish Cypriot enclave at

[71] The presence of a migrant population residing in the walled city of Nicosia has often been the subject of moral panics in the 21st century, at least within Greek Cypriot society (Karathanasis 2017: 297).

[72] Georgios Grivas (1897-1974) was a fierce anti-communist who continued to support enosis after independence, acting for a period as the commander of the Greek Cypriot National Guard. Following his removal from the position of command, he organized his own paramilitary group, EOKA B, which engaged in terrorist activities against the Cypriot state and subsequently participated in the Greek-backed coup d'état against Greek Cypriot president archbishop Makarios III in 1974. Various monuments have been erected commemorating his memory as the leader of EOKA, and multiple streets are named after him. He remains a deeply divisive figure in Greek Cypriot society.

[73] The National Guard is the official military force of the post-1964 Republic of Cyprus.

Kophinou village, leading to the death of 27 Turkish Cypriots (Dodd 2010: 84). This incident was the most intense expression of ethnic violence since the inter-communal clashes of 1963-64.

3. ‘Turkish Cypriot Missing Street’, referring to the Turkish Cypriots that went missing during the inter-communal clashes of the 1960s and the events of 1974 (Kovras & Loizides 2011: 522).
4. ‘Reunified Cyprus Avenue’ signalling support for the reunification of the island.

The action was promoted through the uploading of an edited video on the Facebook page of the Leftist Movement ‘We Want Federation’ (Anon 2017b), which presented the renaming of the signs; accompanied by text explaining each new name to its audience. As the text in the video was written in Greek, the target audience were clearly Greek Cypriots rather than Turkish Cypriots. After presenting footage of individuals attaching the sticker of ‘Reunified Cyprus Avenue’, the video concluded with the following statement:

> The reunification of Cyprus must go through a critical appraisal of our history. Our debt towards the reconstitution of the memory of the victims from both communities is part of the struggle for the reunification of the island (Anon 2017b).

What is here presented is an alternative historicity of violence, which both focuses, but also claims as victims, individuals and groups that are sidelined, or simply left unrecognised from official Greek Cypriot historical narration. The identification with these individuals and groups as victims, acts at the same time as a disassociation with formal narration, as the latter offers no recognition for their existence under the category of ‘victimhood’. Nonetheless, the presentation of such an alternative historicity of violence does not merely offer fragments of an alternative past, but directly contradicts a key ideological element located at the heart of official Greek Cypriot narration – the attachment of exclusive victimhood to the Greek Cypriot community in the modern history of Cyprus. Thus, an alternative pattern of narration makes its appearance, focusing on challenging notions of exclusive victimhood and re-signifying historical responsibility.

7.3. Narrating Historical Responsibility

The challenge of an alternative narration over victimhood, violence and historical responsibility, is directly expressed through texts and articles which bring to the surface the political violence inflicted upon the Turkish Cypriot community during the 1960s and 1970s. For example, in an article focusing on the Cypriot missing persons[74] titled 'Missing Responsibility', published in issue 3 of Eks Iparhis in 1999, the Turkish Cypriot missing are placed at the forefront of the discussion:

> The problem of the missing in Cyprus, in contrast to what is believed, is not exclusively the product of the invasion of 1974, but goes back to the inter-communal clashes of 1963-64. During that period, hundreds of Turkish Cypriots disappeared, with 203 cases still remaining unresolved […]. It should be clarified that the Cypriot government considers this an "internal" matter and has decided not to present these cases to the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus.[75] It can be observed that during the 1960s, within the climate of inter-communal division which dominated, new abductions took place. During the fighting between July and September of 1974, the tracks of Greek Cypriots were lost, but also of many Turkish Cypriots (Anon 1999a: 13).

The article moves on to criticise the Republic of Cyprus for exploiting the fate of the Turkish Cypriot missing in inter-communal negotiations, neglecting for decades to search for these individuals even in cases when it has had sufficient information to do so:

> Beyond the Greek Cypriot missing, there are buried, in the free territories, the bones of the Turkish Cypriot missing. These Turkish Cypriots died early, before they could become "pseudo-citizens in a pseudo-state".[76] […] The Minister of Foreign Affairs

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[74] The term 'Cypriot missing persons' refers to individuals that went missing during the inter-communal clashes of the 1960s and the summer of 1974 (Kovras & Loizides 2011: 522).

[75] The bi-communal Committee for the Missing Persons (CMP) was formed in 1981 with the aim of clarifying the fate of missing persons in Cyprus. Burdened by the politics of the Cyprus Dispute, it remained a largely inefficient organization for decades. After the opening of internal checkpoints in 2003 it has successfully exhumed, identified, and returned the remains of hundreds of missing individuals to their relatives (Kovras & Loizides 2011: 522).

[76] The term 'pseudo-state' is employed in dominant Greek Cypriot discourses to describe the non-recognized Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC), while the prefix 'pseudo' is often placed in front of words which denote the existence of a formal state, such as 'citizen' or 'minister'. Its overuse

> Ioannis Kasoulides stated recently that no exhumation of Turkish Cypriots in the free territories will take place, unless exhumations of Greek Cypriots in the occupied territories begin. The following question is thus raised: With what right the Republic of Cyprus bases its obligation to search for the fate of its Turkish Cypriot citizens, for whom it has information that they are buried in the territories it controls, on the positive or negative will of the other side, whose legality it does not recognise? (Anon 1999b: 14).

Bringing to the surface the existence of the Turkish Cypriot missing is a sensitive, delicate matter, not merely because it disturbs hegemonic narratives of exclusive victimhood, but also because it poses additional questions in relation to Greek Cypriot acts of violence towards Turkish Cypriot civilians during inter-communal clashes, complicating the historical dynamics over political responsibility, victimhood, and aggression. Thus, the documentation and availability of information surrounding Turkish Cypriot victims becomes itself a political act of counter-narration, deconstructing the central claim located at the heart of Greek Cypriot official historiography. In another, anonymously authored article titled 'The Other Missing', published in 2004 in issue 50 of Eks Iparhis, a series of simple statistics in relation to the Turkish Cypriot missing are presented, deconstructing and demystifying the narrative of exclusive victimhood with the simple statement that "[t]o begin with, the Turkish Cypriot missing, as a percentage of the population, are almost double that of Greek Cypriots" (Anon 2004) – simple factuality, rather than extensive rhetoric, is here utilised to deconstruct dominant narratives of victimhood.[77]

Nonetheless, other texts aim to transfer to a Greek Cypriot audience in more detail the suffering inflicted upon Turkish Cypriots during the conflict, by focusing on particular acts of violence committed by Greek Cypriots which have remained embedded in Turkish Cypriot collective memory. A notable example is a short article published in 2003 in issue 45 of Eks Iparhis on the 1974 Tochni massacre, written shortly after the opening of internal checkpoints

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in political discourse has often led to ridicule of the term in everyday speech – in the context of the quoted article, its utilization in the text entails a subtle sarcasm.

[77] A much longer article titled 'The Period of Violence (1956-1974)', published in the September special issue of Kalemi in 2009, follows the same approach, documenting ethnic violence committed by each community from the 1950s until 1974 (Panayiotou 2009). Merely by offering this information in a consistent manner, narratives over exclusive victimhood are challenged, as the very presence of Turkish Cypriot victims contradicts the factuality of dominant narratives.

enabling Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots to freely cross the buffer zone for the first time:

> In the occupied territories there is a village which people call the village of the orphans, or even the village of the women. The village consists of the Sychari and Vouno villages, which have been unified, and which Turkish Cypriots now collectively call Tochni (Taşkentköy), exactly like the village of Tochni in Limassol, which remained mixed until 1974. In this village, the women and children of Tochni were transferred in 1974.[78] The men of the village were executed by paramilitaries, as was declared by those who survived. The small church of the village has been transformed into a museum in their memory, with their photographs and some additional, personal objects. A delegation from Eks Iparhis placed flowers there on the 7th June, with the hope 'never again' (Ahniotis 2003: 8).

Rather than focusing on the massacre itself, the article primarily represents the relatives of its victims, employing topographical descriptions specific to the Turkish Cypriot community, such as the term 'village of the orphans' and the post-1974 name of the village – symbolically charged names which bring to the surface not merely the massacre itself as a historical event, but its lasting effects in the lives of those surviving it. By detailing how family members continue to symbolically commemorate their lost loved ones as part of their collective memory, the article attempts to evoke sympathy and understanding from its reader, a discursive process concluding with the description of placing flowers in the church/museum in memory of the victims, crystalising the recognition of Turkish Cypriot victims as fellow victims of equal stature that should not be forgotten but remembered and commemorated.

The parallel recognition of Turkish Cypriot victims and Greek Cypriot perpetuators continues to appear in later texts, in conflict with official positions raised in relation to the events of the 1960s. In a 2009 text published on the Epanenosi2011 blog commenting on the statement "They raped our women! Our mothers, daughters, and sisters", that was made on a television programme of the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation (RIK) by a Greek Cypriot ex-paramilitary, the anonymous author raised a series of objections, stating that "[t]his phrase refers to the Turkish army in 1974 and was made at the end of the broadcast where the

[78] The text here refers to the population transfer during and shortly after the Turkish invasion of 1974. The surviving Turkish Cypriot population of Tochni was transferred from their village, which is located in the areas still under the control of the Republic of Cyprus, to the areas under the control of the Turkish military forces, as part of this process.

condemnation of the crimes of both sides in 1963-64, which was also the subject of the discussion, was expected", arguing further that it reflected:

> [The] refusal to clearly condemn bi-communal crimes and trying to shift the debate from 1963-64 to 1974. When pressed, he stated that the crimes of 1963-64 were committed by paramilitaries [άτακτοι, ataktoi], while those in 1974 were committed by the official Turkish army, a) negating his earlier argument on Akritas[79] as a legitimate (state) initiative, obscuring reality (really if Akritas members were not paramilitaries, who were these famous paramilitaries? The other organizations of Lyssarides and Samson?[80] Or, if they were also fighters and not criminals then who were the killers? Strangers? Aliens? b) ignoring the crimes of 1974 committed by Greek Cypriots, which is unclear if they were committed by the National Guard (since universal conscription had been declared in the Greek Cypriot community) or by paramilitary groups; and c) ignoring the crimes committed by Greek Cypriot paramilitaries in general (Anon 2009a).

Like previous quoted articles, the text brings to attention the violence inflicted upon Turkish Cypriots following the independence of the island. However, the perpetuators are here placed at the centre of the discourse, rejecting the refusal to assign to Greek Cypriots part of the blame for the inter-communal clashes of the 1960s, as well as for the killing of Turkish Cypriot civilians throughout the 1960s and 1970s. The deflection of attention away from Turkish Cypriot victimhood reflects a common position in Greek Cypriot society, typically associated with Greek Cypriot nationalist rhetoric, which argues that by detailing the killings of Turkish Cypriots, Greek Cypriot suffering is downgraded. An additional argument typically accompanying such perspectives is that crimes against Turkish Cypriots were committed by paramilitaries rather than the official state and thus, by emphasizing them, they are equated with the crimes committed by the Turkish army, demoting and potentially negating the responsibility of the Turkish state for the killing and forced expulsion of Greek

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[79] 'Akritas' here refers to the largest Greek Cypriot paramilitary organisation formed following the independence of the island in 1960. It was under the direct control of the Minister of Interior Polycarpos Giorkatzis and was the central Greek Cypriot paramilitary force during the clashes of 1963-64 (Chrysostomou 2013: 240).

[80] Refers to two different Greek Cypriot paramilitary groups active in the 1960s, formed by Vassos Lyssarides, later the leader of the Movement for Social Democracy party (EDEK), and Nikos Sampson, who later acted as the de-facto president during the short-lived coupist government of 1974 (Chrysostomou 2013: 291).

Cypriots in 1974. This position was further discussed and opposed in an article titled 'Equating Crimes?' that was published in 2010 in the January-February special issue of Kalemi:

> The exhumation of the remains of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots that were missing since 1963-64 and 1974, called to us to face a simple truth, which for reasons of national security we kept for years; deeply buried – that crimes were not committed only by Turkish Cypriots and the Turkish army, but also by Greek Cypriots. As more and more Turkish Cypriot remains emerged from wells and mass graves, they claimed their own place in history. Greek Cypriot society was forced, then, to enter a period of introspection in relation to its past. Things which until then were only articulated in whispers, began to be heard louder. Thus, willy-nilly, we began to talk about the "truth of others" and for our own share of responsibility regarding the fate of this country. We thus entered a process of self-consciousness which is of course, far from completion. No one from those who dared to talk, and continue to do so, ever mentioned "scales of destruction" or "equation of crimes". Deaths, after all, cannot be measured like oranges. The argument of "equation" was born precisely from those resisting what they were seeing unfolding in front of them as another version of history. From those, that is, who comprehended, and still comprehend historical introspection as a sort of vague threat (Zanou 2010: 22).

Thus, the existence of Turkish Cypriot victims signifies, in the text, that the Greek Cypriot community holds a certain, if not clearly defined, responsibility for the historical development of the Cyprus Dispute, in contrast to dominant positions placing all responsibility to Turkey. Recognising Turkish Cypriots as fellow victims of the conflict disrupts official narration, precisely because it raises, at the same moment, questions over the use and abuse of political violence prior to the Turkish invasion, as well as implying a certain inter-communal common experience of suffering, which is not readily compatible with historical narrations exclusively focusing on a single community.

These narratives are, however, not limited to the post-independence period, but also intersect with counter-narrations challenging Greek Cypriot nationalist readings of the anti-colonial struggle, providing rarely articulated negative representations of EOKA. One such case is an article published in 2003 in issue 46 of Eks Iparhis, titled 'The Day They Killed His Mother',

narrating a Turkish Cypriot's visit to his village for the first time since the murder of his mother and brother in 1958 by EOKA members:

> I can imagine his feelings. He must have not walked in this place since that summer afternoon of 1958, the time when the sun was setting, and his mother was preparing dinner. Maybe she was cooking fried potatoes like my mother, in the middle of the garden, where now the tables of the restaurant are placed. Exactly where he sat with his family to eat. Maybe then, that summer afternoon, he was also in the garden of his house like me, following his mother, like I followed mine, with the potatoes freshly fried in olive oil. In a few seconds they would be on the table. The smell of the fried potatoes made us drool. And then the sound of the shot was heard. My mother placed the bowl of potatoes and crossed herself, saying "My God, if its evil, expel it". His mother and brother fell down dead (Rousos 2003b).

By introducing images of a typical family afternoon and drawing an analogy with his own mother, the author produces the effect of direct identification with the victim, humanising the Turkish Cypriot family, while affording responsibility for the killings, as well as for passive accomplice, to both EOKA and the victims' fellow Greek Cypriot villagers:

> The murder must had been decided two or three days before. From the local branch of EOKA? From the top of the leadership? We do not know, nor does it matter. The local head of EOKA must had decided the targets. After all, he didn't have many choices. Two Turkish families lived in the village. The elderly Halilis with his old wife Pempe, and Hasan with his family. Ismail with his family had already migrated to Nicosia. The decision had leaked out to some people. The village was small; and it quickly became a common secret, "they will kill the Turks tonight". Some said, "they will cause trouble for us" and continued to drink their coffee silently, watching old Halilis talking with his elderly wife. […] What did the son of Hasan know about the details of the killing? What could he remember? Was he looking in the eyes of his co-villagers to find the murderers, the accomplices, those who knew and didn't talk, those who drank their coffee with tight teeth, waiting? Was he, perhaps, in the eyes of the -then- local head of EOKA, searching for a simple 'I'm sorry'? (Rousos 2003b).

The effect is one of subtle deconstruction of official narration, as Turkish Cypriot civilians are represented as victimised everyday members of Cypriot society, divorced from political or ideological considerations, while the heroism that is systematically assigned to EOKA

members is stripped away, replaced with an assigning of guilt for the execution of Turkish Cypriots. The deconstruction of the representation of EOKA as a purely heroic national organisation has been further attempted through the documentation of violent actions taken by the organisation against the Greek Cypriot left. In a 2002 article published in issue 36 of Eks Iparhis, titled 'History and its Role, EOKA: The Other Point of View', the image surrounding the broader EOKA struggle is criticised, presenting violent aspects of its activity which have been removed from official narration, such as the killings of Greek Cypriot leftists by EOKA members and the association of its leader with the broader anti-communist Greek far-right of the 1940s, arguing that:

> It is a historical fact that during those four years [1955-59] inexcusable crimes were committed, while whole sections of the population were given, and still carry, the stigma of the 'traitor', or of the opponent to the struggle.[81] Nobody is disputing that most of the fighters and of those who contributed to the struggle had pure incentives and gave everything to the struggle for Union [enosis] of Cyprus with Greece. […] At the same time, however, it should not be sidelined that there were also those who exploited the situation as a means to personal gain. There were even those who used the power of weapons for political reasons, to fight opposing ideologies and parties. […] What we must all comprehend is that the EOKA members were not wearing halos of holiness. […] From the first moment, the mechanism covering up the negative aspects [of the EOKA struggle] went into motion, so that in collective memory only the positive dimensions were preserved. […] [T]here has therefore been constructed a 'true' and a 'false' history. The researcher, the journalist and in general the citizen; had the 'right' to focus on only the first category. The second was, and continues to a great extent to remain, a historical taboo (Michael 2002: 45).

The EOKA struggle remains central in Greek Cypriot dominant narration, legitimising not merely the demand for Union with Greece (enosis), but also the hegemony of the political right in the post-colonial period. Thus, anti-heroic representations of EOKA fracture the broader representation of the struggle, blurring the lines of legitimisation between ethical claims over national self-determination, on the one hand, and the moral or immoral use of

[81] The text here refers to the killings of leftists by EOKA, legitimised through accusations of treason which have not been substantiated by evidence (Demetriou 2019: 160). These killings and accusations appear to have been part of the broader anti-leftist propaganda campaign instigated by the leadership of EOKA in the 1950s (Papadimitriou 2021: 74).

political violence for the achievement of self-determination, on the other. The highlighting of internal ideological divisions within the Greek Cypriot community, which at their peak deteriorated to political violence, offers a further, if subtle, challenge to dominant narration, contradicting the representation of the Greek Cypriot community as a unified, homogenised historical subject fighting for its self-determination in the 20th century.

Dominant historical narratives on each side of the divide do not merely document a particular historical trajectory through a national lens. They legitimise and reinforce existing political positions over the red lines and demands of each ethnic community in relation to the potential resolution of the conflict. Thus, hegemonic Greek Cypriot narratives, in focusing solely on the events of 1974, view the Cyprus Dispute as fundamentally a conflict arising from the Turkish invasion, the subsequent military occupation, and its effects (Anastasiou 2008a: 198). In contrast, by emphasising the 1960s, dominant Turkish Cypriot perspectives aim to legitimise the Turkish invasion as necessary for the protection of Turkish Cypriots from Greek Cypriot aggression, while in parallel stressing the violation of the bi-communal constitutional arrangement of 1960, which had provided the community with a series of rights and powers that protected it, in theory, from such aggression (Anastasiou 2008a: 100). Thus, critiques which blur the lines over historical responsibility and recognise the victimhood of the other community, do not merely have the effect of reintroducing erased events within collective memory or public discussion, but attempt to change dominant perceptions over the causes of the conflict and its potential resolution. In an anonymous 2010 text posted on the Epanenosi2011 blog, titled 'The Cyprus Problem is NOT a Problem of Invasion-Occupation', this is clearly articulated, as the official position of the Republic of Cyprus over the Dispute is directly rejected:

> The Cyprus problem is NOT an invasion-occupation problem. It is ALSO a problem of invasion and occupation. […] This is new to some, right? Of course, it is new if we consider that in official Greek Cypriot propaganda, the Cyprus problem started on a good, warm morning in 1974, with the unprovoked Turkish invasion, etc, etc. Well, things were not like that, and president Christofias[82] knows this, as does our entire political leadership. The Cyprus conflict started at least a decade earlier. Our leaders do not admit this directly, either because they do not have the guts to open such

[82] Demetris Christofias was the president of the Republic of Cyprus from 2008 to 2013. He was the General Secretary of the leftist AKEL party from 1988 to 2009, and the only leftist to have ever become president in the history of the Republic.

> conversations in front of the people, or because if they do, they will face their responsibilities. […] As important as the issue of refugees is for the Greek Cypriot side, so is the issue of participation in the government for the Turkish Cypriots. The Turkish Cypriots have been outside the Republic of Cyprus since 1964 – I am not examining here if they left, or if they were expelled. I examine the fact that since one of the two communities which founded the state in 1960 found itself outside of it, a solution has to be found for its return within it (Anon 2010d).

It is worth noting that while the official line is here challenged, it is not simply negated, but rather complemented by recognising the significance of key demands raised by the Turkish Cypriot community over a future bi-communal internal governance in a reunified federal Cyprus. Thus, one national narrative is not simply swapped with another, but a synthesis of the claims of each side is attempted, by placing responsibility on both sides for the Cyprus Dispute, and thus additionally recognising as valid certain demands originating in the Turkish Cypriot community.

7.4. Alternative Narratives in Participants' Responses

The challenging of official narratives emerged in participants' responses too, primarily by assigning blame for the ongoing partition of the island to both Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalisms. For example, Athina phrased her response over the causes for the continuation of the island's de-facto partition in the following terms:

> [T]he most important thing is that the dominance of the specific nationalisms left incisions on a conscious level, intensifying the local nationalisms that led to the divisions of today. The need of Cypriots to identify with these two dominant narratives stands in the way of any attempt at a solution or reunification (Athina, Greek Cypriot, Female).

Thus, in her response Athina assigns responsibility to both nationalisms for creating the divisions still present in Cyprus, perceiving them as key for the perpetuation of the existing status quo. Occasionally, this perspective is further reflected in the rejection of the claim to exclusive victimhood permeating Greek Cypriot official narration, which does not assign any historical responsibility to the Greek Cypriot side for the events which led to the island's de-

facto partition. In her own response, Katerina criticized what she perceived to be the dominant narrative in both communities, arguing that:

> [T]he narrative of separation is entrenched in the perceptions of the people (whatever percentage of the population this 'people' signifies) and by this, I mean a clear distinction between 'us' (Greek Cypriots) and 'others' (Turkish Cypriots). This is what I believe is the dominant narrative, that is, that we are two distinct entities that are in conflict. This narrative is fed by public education, even in primary school... It is fed by the mass media... By daily expressions and events of a thousand kind. It is based on the presentation of a 'history of trauma' in which the opposing 'entity' (for the Greek Cypriots it's the Turkish Cypriots and vice versa) is responsible for a traumatic past, monolithically, that is, the responsibility of 'our entity' is not recognized. It calls for unity of the members of 'our own entity' against the 'others' in the name of claiming 'that which belongs to us and which the others expropriated' (Katerina, Greek Cypriot, Female).

For Katerina, the representation of the Cyprus Dispute as a conflict between two ethnic communities is opposed, argued to represent the dominant narration of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism, which attempt to negate their own historical responsibility by assigning exclusive blame for a community's historical suffering to the other community, perpetuating the separation of the Cypriot population into opposing groups. A characteristic of Katerinas' response is the conceptual separation of the ethnic groups ('entities') from the 'people', by which the very logic of opposing 'entities' is connected to Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism, upon which the responsibility of the conflict is implicitly placed. Similarly, in her response Maria questioned the official narration promoted in public education, arguing that:

> The teaching of history is one of the main reasons this island does not move forward. Both the Cyprus Republic and [the] TRNC are doing similar things with their teaching of history and textbooks. Instead of trying to understand the other, they [Turkish Cypriots] are simply vilified. Instead of accepting mistakes, they are hidden or justified using the other's gruesome, inexcusable behaviours as an excuse. And the citizens end up growing up with the one-sided story, the story of our side, the 'correct' one. Unless they have contradictory experiences, they grow up with hatred or indifference in their hearts (Maria, Greek Cypriot, Female).

Maria's response focuses her critique of Greek Cypriot narratives taught in public education; under a broader criticism of the educational institutions of both communities, implying that her critical comments towards Greek Cypriot education also extend to the Turkish Cypriot community. For Maria, both communities have historically a responsibility in the unfolding of the conflict, noting that the absence of any recognition of past mistakes further perpetuates existing divisions, reproducing inter-communal hatred. The focus on public education was also reflected in the response of Sofia, a Greek Cypriot woman in her 20s, who raised similar criticisms towards dominant Greek Cypriot narratives promoted by the Ministry of Education, describing them as "school propaganda about Greek Cypriots as the exclusive victims of the conflict", viewing their entrenchment in the curriculum as barriers for the development of a "more critical perception of history". The reference on narratives in public education on the part of the participants is not surprising in the context of Cyprus, where national meta-narratives are presented to students from primary school, with public schools remaining the central institution through which official historical narration is promoted to each new generation. For Nefeli, a Greek Cypriot woman in her 20s, the centrality of national narratives in education has primarily negative effects, entrenching negative perceptions towards the other community:

> To my knowledge and personal experience, I would have to say the propaganda of nationalism which is introduced to kids through their education from a very young age, up until high school. I feel that this creates a heavy trauma far too much for their age, which then develops into resentment and of course racism towards the Turkish Cypriot community. Generally, the history that is being taught which is one-sided, the songs and poems that students are forced to sing, the plays and overall activities with the constant narratives of horror and grief which feed into developing hatred (Nefeli, Greek Cypriot, Female).

Nefeli's response indicates her rejection of official historical narration, which is described as nationalist propaganda presenting a one-sided view of history, producing resentment and discrimination against Turkish Cypriots. It reflects the broader pattern identified in participants' responses, which challenges official narration and rejects the exclusive emphasis placed on Greek Cypriot suffering in relation to modern Cypriot history. In viewing the "constant narratives of horror and grief" critically, however, the broader ethical arguments embedded in official narration begin to further open up to critique, as claims to exclusive victimhood and the exoneration of the Greek Cypriot community from historical

responsibility act as the key ideological legitimisers of the status quo in the post-1964 Republic of Cyprus.

7.5. Concluding Remarks

Alternative narrations manifest themselves in two distinct ways. The first manifestation offers alternative historicities which contest fundamental ideological elements found in dominant Greek Cypriot nationalist narration, such as claims over the trans-historical national identity of the island, further presenting a historicization of Cypriotness through the formulation of alternative political genealogies and interpretations of historical events. The second manifestation takes the form of a critique towards claims over exclusive victimhood characterising Greek Cypriot dominant narration, by highlighting the suffering of the Turkish Cypriot community, further challenging notions of heroism that are typically attributed to Greek Cypriot nationalist fighters. This pattern of counter-narration gives rise to a differentiated perspective on historical responsibility, which attaches responsibility to the Greek Cypriot community for the development of the Cyprus Dispute, contradicting official narratives that represent the Greek Cypriot community exclusively as a victim of the conflict.

As Ernest Renan pointed out, “forgetting [...] is a crucial factor in the creation of a nation” (1990: 11) – the simultaneous processes of forgetting and remembering historical events, figures, and moments, reflects not merely how a collectivity views its past, and therefore itself, but also the peculiar ways it perceives the potentialities entailed in its future. Conflict over historical narration is not uncommon in Cyprus, as competing interpretations of history intersect with positions surrounding the resolution of the Cyprus Dispute, and therefore over visions regarding the island’s future. As Yiannis Papadakis highlighted in his own research on competing historical narrations within the Greek Cypriot community:

> If anything unites Greek Cypriots in a community, it is their participation in a debate about what constitutes the nation, not some shared conception of "the nation." This is the core of the debate on the Cyprus Problem, which takes place through the construction of narratives that simultaneously challenge and define relations of inclusion and exclusion, territoriality, and the plots of pertinent historical adventures (Papadakis 1998: 162).

The critiquing of dominant historical narration and the formulation of alternative narratives over Cypriotness, victimhood and historical responsibility, far from concerning themselves primarily with the recent or distant past, offer a direct challenge to perspectives surrounding the island's present and future. By acknowledging Turkish Cypriots as victims of the conflict, assigning responsibility to the Greek Cypriot community for its development and historicising alternative visions of collective identity, Cypriotist narration converges with pro-reunification calls in support of a bi-communal, federal reunification of the island. The next chapter explores the political positions, arguments, and visions in relation to this proposed federal reunification, as these have been reflected in the collected data.

8. Perceptions on Bi-Communal Federalism

This chapter presents views on the reunification of Cyprus, focusing on perceptions relating to the existing status quo, as well as on bi-communal federalism, the model which has acted as the basis for the resolution of the Cyprus Dispute since 1977. The first section of the chapter offers a historical contextualisation over the form of the state in the context of the Cyprus Dispute, briefly outlining shifts and changes in the internal structure of the Republic of Cyprus, noting the parallel development of an autonomous Turkish Cypriot administration. The discussion then moves on to outline the general principles characterising bi-communal federalism, alternatives favoured by Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot anti-federalists; and the more favourable perceptions that have arisen within each ethnic community in relation to its potential materialisation.

The chapter moves on to examine perceptions over federalism expressed in participants' responses and in collected documents, noting that the general support towards reunification extends further to an uncompromising support towards federalism. While this support is often connected with opposition to Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism, since the materialisation of federalism is perceived as a defeat of these hegemonic forms of nationalism, the chapter moves on to discuss in more detail how the federal model is presented as desirable in-itself, a position founded upon a general rejection of majoritarian modes of governance. This rejection is in turn countered by presenting fundamental political principles found in the proposed federal model, such as communal autonomy and the political equality between the two ethnic communities, as preferable and ideal, in contrast to dominant Greek Cypriot perceptions, which present them as the outcome of political compromise.

Drawing on participants' responses, the chapter concludes by exploring views and perceptions surrounding the perpetuation of de-facto partition. Noting how participants contradict dominant views found in Greek Cypriot society, which attribute the continuation of the status quo on the intransigence of Turkey, it moves on to discuss three key factors presented by participants; the hegemony of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism, the interests of economic and political elites, and the absence of broader social pressure for the island's reunification. While noting the differentiation of participants' responses from hegemonic explanations for the continuation of partition, a heighted attribution of responsibility to sections of Greek Cypriot society is further identified, indicating that conflictual interpretations over political responsibility are not restricted to historical

narration, but further extend to contemporary narratives that aim to explain the continuation of the island's partition.

8.1. The Role of the State in the Cyprus Dispute

Cyprus was declared an independent country with the formation of the Republic of Cyprus in 1960. The constitution of the newly established state organised political structures through the principle of bi-communality, with each ethnic community acquiring the status of a constitutionally-entrenched political community, having an equitable access to political power (Salem 1992: 119). The constitution further provided guarantees that no ethnic community could dominate over the other, by granting the Turkish Cypriot community a series of additional rights enabling their representatives to block decisions in key areas of policy and legislation (Salem 1992: 119).[83] As Costas Costantinou has noted, "[p]ostcolonial Cypriot identity is quintessentially and inescapably hyphenated; and hyphenated across a fixed Greek-Turkish axis. Being simply and singly Cypriot is a constitutional impossibility" (2007: 248).

The bi-communal Republic of Cyprus lasted for a mere three years, a period which was characterised by tensions between the political representatives of the two communities over the enforcement of the constitution. This tension was itself a reflection of a broader struggle over political power that was unfolding within both communities, as well as between them (Hadjidemetriou 2021). The eventual demise of bi-communalism came with the inter-communal violence of 1963-64, triggered by the initiative of Greek Cypriot president archbishop Makarios III to amend the constitution in terms favourable to the Greek Cypriot community, leading to a constitutional crisis. Makarios' proposals aimed to effectively convert the Republic into a mono-communal, majoritarian state, downgrading the Turkish Cypriot community from the position of a political community to that of an ethnic minority (Kızılyürek 2019: 488).

The violence of the 1960s resulted in the Greek Cypriot community taking over the state, with Turkish Cypriots largely forced into ethnically segregated enclaves, surrounded by

[83] These rights included the power to veto key decisions, such as matters on defence and the budget, afforded to the Turkish Cypriot vice-president and the Turkish legislative Communal Chamber (Salem 1992: 119-120). Democratic checks and balances were also largely maintained through bi-communal structures.

Greek Cypriot military and paramilitary forces (Ekici 2019: 23). Excluded from the mechanisms of the Republic, the Turkish Cypriot community lived under an alternative Turkish Cypriot administration that was both financed, and heavily controlled by the Republic of Turkey (Moudouros 2022: 86). What emerged was thus a Republic of Cyprus functioning, practically, as a Greek Cypriot state, founded upon the suspension of fundamental articles of the constitution (Ioannides & Pastellopoulos 2020: 71). While inter-communal negotiations took place during the 1960s with the aim of reaching a consensus over constitutional reform, bi-communality has never been reintroduced in the Republic of Cyprus, which continues to function through the suspension of its constitution, legitimised by the 'Doctrine of Necessity'.[84] Excluded from the mechanisms of the Republic, the Turkish Cypriot community developed its own communal political conscience, ingrained by the experience of enclave life and its corresponding administrative structures (Moudouros 2022: 98).

The 1974 Greek-backed coup d'état against president archbishop Makarios III, and the subsequent invasion of the island by Turkish forces, dramatically altered power relations within Cyprus and complicated further what has been known as the Cyprus Dispute. The events of 1974 were accompanied by the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Cypriots, creating two ethnically homogenised areas separated by a buffer zone administered by the forces of the United Nations. The area north of the buffer zone, accounting for 38% of the island's territory, came under the control of the Turkish army, concentrating the vast majority of Turkish Cypriots (Kliot & Mansfield 1997: 503-504). A Turkish Cypriot administration, with its own executive, legislative and judicial structures, was formed, declaring itself an independent Turkish Cypriot state in 1983 under the name 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus' (TRNC) – it has however failed to receive recognition, leaving the Turkish Cypriot community in political and economic isolation, with Turkey maintaining a powerful influence on its internal politics (Ekici 2019: 50). The rest of Cyprus remains under the control of the Republic of Cyprus, the only state legally recognised as having sovereignty over the whole island. Direct communication between the two sides became possible only since 2003, with the opening and permanent establishment of checkpoints accessible to the general public, enabling the crossing of civilians across the buffer zone (Ioannou 2020: 55).

[84] The 'Doctrine of Necessity' is a legal argument employed in a 1964 court case at the Cypriot Supreme Court, which provided the legal basis upon which the partial suspension of the 1960 constitution was legitimised, allowing for the state to function under Greek Cypriot control (Trimikliniotis & Bozkurt 2010: 96).

With Cyprus de-facto partitioned in 1974, inter-communal negotiations have shifted towards finding a political consensus which would allow for the reunification of the island under a single state structure. The framework for such a consensus was set by the High-Level Agreement of 1977 (Ker-Lindsay 2011: 49), which established the mutually agreed political model for the resolution of the Dispute, which came to be known by the rather jargonistic term of 'bi-zonal, bi-communal federation'.[85] Based on this model, Cyprus would be transformed into a federal state consisting of two constituent states under a central federal government (Ker-Lindsay 2009: 16). Each community would have control over its own constituent state, which would be granted significant autonomy, while the federal government would have a bi-communal political structure, securing equitable access for each community in the decision-making process (Ker-Lindsay 2011: 79). Like the constitution of 1960, this new arrangement is expected to maintain political equality between the two communities, reversing the post-1964 suspension of bi-communality in the Republic of Cyprus. Details over bi-communal mechanisms, as well as the power distribution between the federal government and the two constituent states, remain subject to negotiations, as are questions surrounding the right of return for the internally displaced, compensation of property lost in 1974, the number of settlers allowed to remain after reunification, and matters pertaining to defence and demilitarisation (Ker-Lindsay 2011).[86]

The closest the island has ever reached to reunifying was in 2004, when the Annan Plan, a comprehensive constitutional plan supported by the United Nations, was placed in parallel referendums. Despite being rejected by the Turkish Cypriot nationalist leadership, it was widely supported by the left-wing Turkish Cypriot opposition, which organised mass rallies in its favour (Moudouros 2022: 407). In contrast, the plan was opposed by the vast majority of Greek Cypriot political actors, including the president, the majority of political parties and the Greek Cypriot Orthodox Church (Pericleous 2009: 273-309). The plan was rejected by the vast majority of Greek Cypriot voters (76%), while the majority of Turkish Cypriot voters approved it (64%) (Ioannou 2020: 74). Despite the failure of the Annan Plan, inter-communal negotiations continued, reaching their most recent peak in 2017, only to subsequently collapse, with Greek Cypriot president Anastasiades assigning blame to Turkey, amidst

[85] In the subsequent discussion of this chapter, when the term 'federation' is used, it corresponds to the 'bi-zonal, bi-communal federation' model, unless otherwise specified.

[86] It is expected that as part of a federal settlement, a portion of the currently occupied territory will come under the control of the Greek Cypriot constituent state, while financial compensation will be provided for displaced Greek Cypriots whose property will not be reinstituted.

widespread accusations that he had tacitly shifted his support towards a two-state[87] solution to the conflict (Ioannou 2020: 168-169).

The prospect of federal reunification has significantly influenced the political landscape, creating a variety of positions alongside a pro-federalist and an anti-federalist axis.[88] Opposition to federalism in the Turkish Cypriot community is primarily connected with the political right; which promotes the vision of a formalised, permanent partition through the international recognition of the TRNC as a sovereign state. Turkish Cypriot support for federalism is primarily, if not exclusively, associated with the political left, perceiving federal reunification as the opportunity of the Turkish Cypriot community to be reintegrated within an internationally recognised state, while safeguarding its autonomy and character as a political community, autonomous both from the Republic of Turkey as well as from the Greek Cypriot community (Moudouros 2022: 457). In contrast, Greek Cypriot anti-federalists primarily reject the principle of political equality between the two communities, envisioning a 'unitary' state founded upon majoritarianism, arguing that Greek Cypriots, constituting the majority of the population, should enjoy equivalent access to the powers of the state (Ioannou 2020: 100-101).[89] Federalism is formally supported by the two largest Greek Cypriot political parties, the right-wing DISY party; and the left-wing AKEL party. Nonetheless, the federal model is widely viewed as a 'painful compromise' within Greek Cypriot society, including amongst supporters of the federal model, with its acceptance perceived to be a necessity created by the effects of the Turkish invasion of 1974, rather than being desirable in-itself (Bahcheli & Noel 2014: 663-664).[90]

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[87] Theoretically, a two-state solution to the Cyprus Dispute would formalize the existing de-facto partition, through the recognition of two sovereign states on the island.

[88] There also exist clear divergences in the formal positions of each side on the negotiating table, with Greek Cypriots most often supporting a strong central government, and Turkish Cypriots typically supporting extensive devolution of powers to the constituent states; while each side interprets political equality differently (Ker-Lindsay 2011: 80-81).

[89] As noted by Gregoris Ioannou (2020: 101), such positions practically maintain the existing status quo, as a return to a unitary state, at least through inter-communal negotiations, is unfeasible.

[90] This perception is also consistently expressed in surveys, with Greek Cypriots primarily favouring a unitary state, placing federalism as a tolerable second-best option (Bahcheli & Noel 2014: 674). A similar pattern is identifiable amongst Turkish Cypriots in relation to formalised partition and federal reunification.

8.2. Supporting Federalism

Support for federalism was widespread and consistent throughout participants' responses and the collected documents. While federalism was a common topic of discussion across the collected documents, at closer examination a clear shift of focus over time becomes evident. Prior to the Annan Plan referendum of 2004, discussions surrounding the potential bi-communal federal reunification of Cyprus focused on the technical aspects of various proposals appearing in negotiations, such as the various forms that federation has taken across the globe, the perceived negative and positive aspects of the proposed federal model, and the various technical mechanisms proposed for the re-establishment of a bi-communal political structure. Such discussions were consistently present in the left-wing Eks Iparhis magazine (1999-2004), which published articles from multiple points of view surrounding the technical and political implications of Cyprus' federal reunification. During its publishing history, 15 articles of this nature were published in the magazine, a process which intensified after the emergence of the Annan Plan, with an additional 12 articles published focusing exclusively on the plan, its prospects, and its provisions.

Following the failure to safeguard a Yes vote from both communities in the Annan Plan referendums of 2004 (Ioannou 2020: 74), leading to the abandonment of the proposed plan as a basis for the island's reunification, discussions surrounding the technical or negative aspects of bi-communal federalism quickly fade out in the collected data. Even on occasions where such discussions do take place, primarily in the Epanenosi2011 blog, they are presented from a clear position of support towards bi-communal federalism, offering either explanatory descriptions of the political mechanisms proposed in inter-communal negotiations, or support of such proposed mechanisms. The details surrounding federal reunification were no longer the centre of attention, with the focus shifting towards the creation of a discourse in support of reunification itself. Although this shift was rarely openly articulated, it was directly addressed in the first post on the Epanenosi2011 blog, posted originally in 2009 and titled 'Welcome', which stated that:

> Together with the rest of society, we support the efforts made by the leaders of the two communities to find a fair and sustainable solution to the Cyprus Problem. We reject the arguments, positions, and objections of the rejectionists.[91] The development

[91] The term 'rejectionism' is employed in Greek Cypriot political discourse to describe positions held by political parties and individuals that are opposed to the bi-communal federal model as a basis for

> of a healthy dialogue on all aspects concerning the agreed solution, the referendums and the future coexistence with our Turkish Cypriot compatriots are some of the main topics that will concern the blog. […] The battle for resolution and reunification must be won first in the public sphere and then at the ballot box. Bloggers will keep firm to their corresponding role, using this online space as a bastion (Anon 2009b).

Support towards federal reunification was consistently accompanied by a series of political arguments highlighting its desirability, presenting the materialisation of federation as a defeat of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism and their corresponding historical hegemony. In turn, such argumentation directly rejected the dominant position surrounding federalism found in Greek Cypriot society, which presents it as a compromise for the Greek Cypriot community, acceptable only because of the ongoing occupation of the island by Turkish forces (Bahcheli & Noel 2014: 663-664). For example, in a 2009 article criticising opponents of federalism, published in issue 7 of Kalemi and titled 'The Memory of the Future', this position is directly challenged:

> They promote [partition] because it is through the division of the two communities that they have gained their influence and their power, and only through its perpetuation they safeguard their permanent dominance. […] With these facts in mind, the federal solution is not what we were conditioned to believe, that is, a retreat to the point of treachery. On the opposite, it is the only solution that will rid us from the permanent domination of nationalists on all levels of social life. The only solution that will push us to transcend the stereotype of the ethnic group as the only unifying element, and to search for forms of sociality and society, through institutions that are truly democratic, through the pride of a new politics. If the federal solution model did not exist, we would have had to invent it[92] (Pavlou 2009: 3).

Federal reunification is thus re-signified from a political compromise to a desirable necessity, further described as a rupture with the status quo. Its materialisation is here connected with a defeat of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism, displacing these ideologies from

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the island's reunification. It is often used negatively in pro-reunification circles, and depending on the context, it may be employed either descriptively, to signify positions that are openly opposed to federation, or as a political label, entailing the accusation of secretly supporting partition.

[92] The last sentence appears to be paraphrasing a similar statement from a pro-federation article from 1993, published originally in the anarchist magazine Traino stin Poli (Train in the City). The article is discussed below.

their hegemonic position, opening the possibility of a democratic politics unburdened by the historically dominant forms of nationalism in Cyprus. In another 2009 article published in the September special issue of Kalemi, titled 'Ideological Dilemmas in the Interior of Greek Cypriot Nationalism', the connection between federal reunification and the potential displacement of dominant nationalisms is again highlighted:

> Almost fifty years since the creation of the Republic of Cyprus, national identities in Cyprus continue to be constructed within a field of signified symbols established on the island by the two dominant nationalisms. The question that needs to be asked; is whether it is possible to seek any peaceful resolution to the problem, without questioning mono-communal interpretations of history and the character of the island. Such a questioning might be able to support, on both sides of the green line,[93] that a solution based on constitutional patriotism of citizens towards their state, a solution that will attempt to serve and safeguard the island's multiculturalism, which will promote unity; without threatening the ethnic and religious difference of each community, or creating the suspicion of subjugation of one community under the other, that such a solution is not a compromise for any side, but the ideal system for our country (Pachoulides 2009: 29).

Compared and contrasted with the national goals of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism, federalism is presented as the institutional entrenchment of the island's multiculturalism, providing the necessary cultural autonomy for each community. Federalism is assigned here the characteristics of cultural pluralism that have been outlined in previous chapters as being attached to notions of Cypriotness. By viewing Cyprus as culturally heterogenous and pluralistic, bi-communal federation is argued to transcend existing mono-communalism, by maintaining the political unity of the island without compromising its multiculturalism on the institutional level, making federalism the ideal, desirable institutional structure for a reunified Cyprus. In a 2010 article published in the January-February special issue of Kalemi, titled 'Steps in the Struggle: A Hundred Days to Change our World', federation is again contrasted with the dominant nationalisms of the island, emphasizing their antithetical political aims:

[93] The term 'Green Line' is occasionally employed to describe the buffer zone running throughout the island.

> [T]he two communities have two, and only two roads in front of them. Partition, or federation, but federation in a way that one community will not be able to impose its choices on the other. Federation is therefore a compromise, but not in the sense that the Greek, or Greek Cypriot nationalism of Cyprus attributes to it, which believes that it has the right, as a majority, to lead the minority to any direction it wants. It is of course neither a compromise in the sense attributed to it by Turkish, or Turkish Cypriot nationalism, which continues to consider partition its historical goal. Federation is for us desirable as the aim of our struggle, because it is the proper way by which the communities can co-exist, while in parallel maintaining our little country as the country of all Cypriots. It is also an answer which we owe to our History, in which national egoism dominated, leading to destructive consequences (Ahniotis 2010: 2).

Federation is again presented here as desirable, rather than as a political compromise, an institutional resolution to the conflict which would transcend the antithetical aims of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism. By stating that Greek Cypriot nationalism maintains the belief "that it has the right, as a majority, to lead the minority", the article presents a particular historicization of its position, alluding to the inter-communal conflict of the 1960s, which led to the overtaking of the state by the Greek Cypriot community, the abolition of bi-communalism, and the parallel expulsion of Turkish Cypriots from its mechanisms. Thus, federation is perceived as desirable not merely because it will reunify the island, but also because the entrenchment of communal autonomy within the mechanisms of the state is perceived as a safeguard against the possibility of one community dominating the other. The legal codification of the two ethnic communities as political communities of equal stature is therefore here reinforced as desirable, precisely because it is perceived to protect from a repeating of past inter-communal conflict.

A similar position was expressed in an article published in issue 10 of the Entropia magazine in 2017, addressing more explicitly the history of inter-communal violence in relation to federalism. Titled 'Federation or Death', the article is a republication of a text that was originally circulated in 1993, in issue 10 of the anarchist magazine Train stin Poli (Train in the City), and which has remained influential in the extra-parliamentary political circles of the Republic (Pastellopoulos 2022: 76). Beginning with a direct critique of dominant views surrounding federation in Greek Cypriot society, it argues that:

> For many, even among the supporters of federation, the pre-1974 situation, with the island supposedly unified, is a desirable arrangement, that is, an ideal, and if they stand in support for federation, it is because they recognize that a return to that arrangement is now impossible. This approach is completely mistaken. We have to finally understand that there exists on this island another community which wants to; and has the right to live, and that a return to the pre-1974 arrangement is not only unattainable but also undesirable and catastrophic, because it would again lead, in a short period of time, to clashes, destruction and death. That is why we must comprehend, beyond the fantasies of "national completion" and other such nonsense, federation as not a solution out of necessity but as an ideal solution. The faster we understand this, the better (Trotsky 2017: 9).[94]

The rejection of majoritarianism is here absolute, designating Greek Cypriot dominance as the key factor for the development of inter-communal conflict prior to 1974, thus marking majoritarianism as undesirable and catastrophic. In comparison, federation is presented as an ideal arrangement, as necessary for the transcendence of inter-communal conflict, internal political divisions, and cultural stereotyping:

> Federation is therefore an imperative necessity for a number of reasons but also for life, laughter and eroticism. It is the need to feel all people as fellow humans without dividing them into Greeks and Turks, compatriots and barbarians and Europeans and Orientals. Federation is a necessity because there is no other prospect for the inhabitants of this island, if they want to create a future as peaceful and happy as possible, in these hard times we live in. Even if federation did not exist anywhere in the world, we would have had to invent it. In fact, we are late, very late, we should had invented it long before 1974. What happened, happened though (Trotsky 2017: 9).

Arguing that federation was also necessary prior to the de-facto partition of the island in 1974 highlights a particular understanding over the Cyprus Dispute, which rejects the dominant Greek Cypriot position viewing the Dispute as primarily the result of the Turkish invasion, tracing it instead to the aspirations of the Greek Cypriot community to dominate over the state. This rejection of majoritarianism was also highlighted in a pamphlet circulated by the

[94] The article was originally signed with the name 'Marios Trotsky', a pseudonym (Pastellopoulos 2022: 75).

anti-authoritarian group Syspirosi Atakton in 2016, titled 'Yes! Federation!', which was subsequently reprinted in 2017 in issue 10 of the Entropia magazine (Syspirosi Atakton 2017). The text takes a strong stance against majoritarianism, highlighting the experience of the 1960s, as well as the subordination of minorities to the will of the majority:

> We consider that the political solution of the Cyprus Issue within the framework of a Bizonal Bicommunal Federation (BBF) is essential. A solution under a framework of a 'unitary state' ignores the failure of the 1960's 'unitary state'[95] and its consequences. With the ethnic majority (namely the Greek Cypriots) imposing themselves upon the minority (Turkish Cypriots) the conflict between the two communities intensified, something which led to the partition of the island. Supporting the unitary state accepts thus a fait accompli, and […] [therefore accepts] partition, whilst it fails to comprehend the mistakes and failures of the majority. We, contrary to the advocates (of various ideologies) of the 'unitary state', consider the 'unitary state', the one-person-one-vote principle, and thus the rule of the majority, to be "racist"[96] arrangements, since they always lead to the marginalisation of ethnic and other minorities, creating political and social exclusions. It is time for the majority, the Greek Cypriot community, to recognise their privilege on one hand, in having the monopoly of the "legal" state for so many years, and to recognise the isolation of the Turkish Cypriot community on the other, within a regime that rendered them invisible to the global stage (Syspirosi Atakton 2016: 1).

The text moved on to repeat the position that federation should not be understood as a compromise, but as an ideal institutional resolution to the Cyprus Dispute, arguing that:

> We support the BBF solution, not as a "painful compromise we are forced into in order to avoid the partition", but as the ideal institutional solution […] since it recognises the historical, geographical, and political reality of Cyprus; it gives autonomy to the communities but also space for coexistence for those who do not place themselves [under them], nor recognise ethnic identities (Syspirosi Atakton 2016: 2).

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[95] The term 'unitary state' is often used in Cypriot political discourse to refer to a majoritarian state structure.

[96] The term 'racist' is here put in quotation marks because it is quoting anti-federalist statements which call bi-communal federation racist. What is here implied is the reverse, that majoritarian rule is inherently racist, while federation is not.

Thus, in reunifying the island while maintaining communal autonomy, the federal reunification of Cyprus is presented as a desirable outcome, perceived to enable the development of inter-communal coexistence beyond ethnic identification, while safeguarding the Turkish Cypriot community against the imposition of Greek Cypriot political domination. The text moved on to argue that:

> We will have the opportunity to redefine identities of 'one-Self' and the 'Other', and the notion of borders. We will thus be able to create new identities; ones which will not be based on exclusions, since they will be relational, and they will not rely on divisive dichotomies. Rather, they will be formed and transformed based on our contacts and relations between us, and between us and our environment (Syspirosi Atakton 2016: 2).

The materialisation of federalism is thus perceived to fundamentally disturb the existing status quo, enabling the formation of new identities transcending divisiveness and othering – other dimensions of this disturbance are additionally highlighted in the text, including the delegitimization of militarism, the liberation of public education from national narratives, and the co-ordination of social movements across the whole territory of the island. This positive support towards federation, paralleled with a rejection of majoritarianism, was also stressed in participants' responses. For example, Thanasis argued that:

> I believe [that federation] is the only possible solution under the current state of things. it is internationally supported and recognized as the legitimate solution. I do not believe another model will be discussed and [be] internationally legitimized, apart from the negotiated federal model, therefore, as I want peace and not a [two-state] solution, I support the federal one. Furthermore, the control of the majority under a one-state solution will inevitably lead the Greek Cypriot community taking majority ethnic power, whereas the federal model sees the differentiating interests and balances them (Thanasis, Greek Cypriot, Male).

Thus, for Thanasis, the political dominance of the Greek Cypriot community in a reunified Cyprus is viewed as a negative outcome, while the proposed federal structure, in reintroducing the principle of bi-communality, provides sufficient safeguarding against such a possibility. Like Thanasis, Andreas also emphasized these dimensions of federalism, stating that:

> I believe that the federalist model is not a painful compromise, but the ideal model for the reunification of Cyprus, as I believe that the political equality of the communities, as well as cross-voting, can function as checks and balances within the state apparatus and over political power (Andreas, Greek Cypriot, Male).

Political equality and cross-voting are principles and mechanisms that have been proposed in inter-communal negotiations for the equitable communal participation in the decision-making process. For Andreas, these mechanisms are desirable in the context of a reunified federal Cyprus, as they are expected to maintain communal autonomy, barring the monopolisation of political power by a single ethnic community. Stressing communal autonomy as a desirable aspect of federalism is also clearly articulated in a 2016 untitled announcement of the Leftist Movement 'We Want Federation',[97] which was subsequently republished in issue 10 of the Entropia magazine in 2017:

> Bizonal bi-communal federation (BBF) is today the most suitable political arrangement possible and not a painful compromise. It is the fundamental historical result of the development of intercommunal relations, as these were shaped through nationalist conflicts, intolerance, and external interventions. BBF is the ideal solution under the circumstances because it is the only one that can allow the two communities to co-exist equally and safely under a state, while maintaining a degree of communal autonomy. Only the abolition of the division of the Cypriot people, through reunification, can create those conditions for the overcoming of ethno-communalism, for the formation of genuine independence. […] We do not forget that in a divided Cyprus, both the Left and the popular strata are condemned to be continuously poisoned by nationalisms and militarisms, while both communities will continue their attachment towards the "motherlands" (Leftist Movement 'We Want Federation' 2017: 29).

Like many of the extracts quoted above, support for the federal reunification of the island is presented as the ideal arrangement for resolving the Cyprus Dispute, described as a pivotal event initiating the defeat of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism. Nonetheless, federation is not perceived as ideal merely because it enables the reunification of Cyprus under a single state structure, but because it is argued to enable future bi-communal

[97] As the website of the group went offline, it was not possible to locate the original version of the announcement.

collaboration at the same time as it protects, through the entrenchment of communal autonomy, from the re-emergence of a majoritarian mode of governance. This intersection of communal autonomy with the possibility of inter-communal collaboration was also highlighted by Maria, who argued in favour of federal reunification by stating that:

> I find this model appropriate mainly because I see us all as humans first and focus on our similarities before our differences. I think it is important that we work together for matters that concern us all. This model also allows for autonomy on a local management level, which is also important as local communities will have a say in the changes they would like to see for their areas and will be independent on some level to express their 'individuality'. In general, as a concept, I see it as a well-balanced model and a potential peace maker, only if the people of both communities are willing to cooperate on a political level (Maria, Greek Cypriot, Female).

Maria's response reflects how communal autonomy and inter-communal collaboration are perceived as positive outcomes, but perhaps more interestingly, that they are also further understood to be in harmony with each other. This is further indicated in the responses of other participants, such as Sofia, who stressed that federation offers a good model for reconciling communal mistrust and inter-communal collaboration:

> I believe that this model is a good basis on which to rebuild trust between the two communities, which is necessary for a longer peaceful coexistence. This model ensures to some extent that the communities maintain a kind of autonomy, while at the same time laying the foundations for cooperation in various fields. So, it provides some safety nets for those who still feel insecure with the Other, but at the same time it sets the conditions, if there is always good will, for a more fundamental reunification in the future. By the concept of 'fundamental reunification' [ουσιαστική επανένωση], I mean a reunification that goes beyond the bureaucratic solutions of the type that declares, 'you will be in this region, we will be in the other', and that progresses to a gradual liberation from ethnic stereotypes, laying the foundations for meaningful collaborations between individuals of the communities in various fields (Sofia, Greek Cypriot, Female).

Thus, for Sofia, the institutionalisation of communal autonomy within a unified federal state is positively perceived, argued to establish the fundamental basis upon which inter-communal collaboration can be built and extended, eroding, and potentially transcending ethnic

stereotyping. A similar emphasis on collaboration was stressed by other participants, such as Max, who argued in favour of the federal model primarily because of its perceived capacity to reunify and demilitarise the island, opening the possibility of broad inter-communal cooperation:

> I believe it is the only model that will help the political reunification of this land and that would help us live together, share power and reduce corruption and co-decide the future of our land. It is the way to get rid of motherlands, of all armies. And in the midst of this, let's build common movements and struggles, in all issues (Max, Greek Cypriot, genderqueer).

Alexandra also emphasised collaboration, highlighting how, in her view, the institutional entrenchment of inter-communal cooperation within a federal Cyprus will open the possibility of transcending historical divisions:

> I believe that bi-zonal bi-communal federation; or some other form of federation that will provide the feeling of security to each community without guarantor forces,[98] is the appropriate solution to the Cyprus Problem. This is because the system that needs to be implemented must take into account the history of the Cyprus Problem that brought about this strict separation between the communities, as well as the time they remained separate, where propaganda was reinforced and the healing of collective wounds from inter-communal conflicts was prolonged. At the same time, the necessity of the cooperation of the two communities and zones for the functioning of the state gives the prospect of building a common history, which I hope will in time bring the communities together and create a common Cypriot identity (Alexandra, Greek Cypriot, Female).

Thus, for Alexandra, federalism is viewed as a steppingstone upon which broader collaborations can be built, entrenching a unified Cypriot identity beyond the modes of adversarial identification promoted by hegemonic nationalisms. The relationship of federalism with identity was further discussed by Paris, who argued that federal reunification:

[98] This is a reference to the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee, which gave the right to Greece, Turkey, and the United Kingdom to intervene in Cyprus in a case of constitutional breakdown, for the purpose of re-establishing the constitutional order of the Republic of Cyprus (Kyriakides 2009: 431).

> [T]hreatens the idea of being Greek or Turkish because it means losing that dominance of the 'pure blooded'. It nullifies the invocation of calling for an ancient past in the Greek case, but I'm not sure if another society is even possible to imagine for the people who buy that invocation. On that note, I'm not sure of what I'm about to say, but I think the arguments for and against federation don't question the issues and solutions that will come up after the creation of a new federalist state. I think it will be a very difficult and long-term process to handle, especially when you have nationalist actors in parliament. It's a thorn that has to be taken out and dealt with over time. […] I think Cypriots are stuck in this eternal loop of a vortex, and whoever tries to swim outside it is dragged back in. Although yes, I support the federal model to get out of this vortex, even I feel it's difficult to express a full opinion of it because I'm not sure if it's possible outside theory, or if discussing it is simply part of that vortex. So, it's difficult to say that what is possible, is also possible to actualize. It's almost as if Cypriots have generated a Stockholm syndrome to their liminality (Paris, Migratory Background, Male).

For Paris, federalism is therefore primarily supported because it is perceived as a challenge to hegemonic nationalisms and the national identities that they reproduce. While his response is characterised by pessimism, including the belief that Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism will continue to pose a challenge after reunification, federation itself remains situated in an antagonistic relation with these nationalisms, with its materialisation retaining the potentiality of challenging them. Nefeli, a Greek Cypriot woman in her mid-20s, also connected her support for federation with her opposition to hegemonic nationalisms, noting that she would support federalism if it included demilitarisation, the removal of restrictions to freedom of movement and the removal of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism from their position of hegemony:

> I would be okay with it if it was about: Reforming education so it won't breed nationalist minds, no borders, no Greek or Turkish flags showing off patriotism, same opportunities and treatment for the communities of the island (all needs met), no more soldier posts or bases (Nefeli, Greek Cypriot, Female).

Nonetheless, a minority of participants offered differentiated responses from the perceptions and positions outlined above. These responses did not diverge from supporting reunification; but provided alternative points of emphasis or argumentation in relation to federalism. For

example, Artemis clearly expressed that her prioritisation is reunification itself, rather than the specific state structure proposed for its accomplishment, stating that:

> I don't care what way they will find to solve the Cyprus Problem. In my opinion, the most important thing is to get out of this intermediate liminal space (limbo) and to be able to live together, under the same roof, so that claims from below can be strengthened, as well as the unification of the communities. I am obviously against any two-state solution. But the form of federation or confederation does not concern me much (Artemis, Greek Cypriot, Female).

A similar point of emphasis on reunification is evident in the response of Achilleas, who stated that bi-communal federation was not his "favourite constitutional solution to the puzzle". Nonetheless, he expressed his support towards it; as:

> [I]t is the predominant most likely vehicle of a solution (at least it was up until 2017, then there was a period of experimentation until 2021). Now of course things are in question. It's unclear if this is still a viable solution, or if the elites on both sides still believe in it. I would be open to other constitutional solutions, e.g., a cantonal solution. […] I would also be open to a unitary state with an autonomous Turkish Cypriot area. Some kind of confederational structure might even be possible. The two-state solution is of course the worst-case scenario, but I am not sure if it is worse than the status quo since unification of the two sides can be achieved through membership of the north in the European Union (EU). The EU would not permit non-EU armies. It might be interesting to have two Cypriots on the European Commission, for example (Achilleas, Greek Cypriot, Male).

Achilleas' response highlights his preference for a reunified political space, rather than the specific internationally agreed model proposed to achieve this outcome. Nonetheless, in all suggested models outlined by Achilleas, Turkish Cypriot autonomy is assumed and taken as granted, indicating his support for its institutional entrenchment. The proposed scenario of a two-state solution is itself indicative of Achilleas' focus on reunification, as his suggestion assumes demilitarisation and the creation of a Turkish Cypriot state within the European Union, of which the Republic of Cyprus is already a member, uniting the two communities within a broader, supra-national legal and political structure. Such a scenario would presuppose the enforcement of EU fundamental rights across both of the theorised Cypriot states, allowing for the freedom of movement, settlement, work, and political participation for

Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots across the whole area of the island, an outcome that would, theoretically, improve significantly inter-communal interaction in comparison to the existing status quo.

Another alternative perspective is identifiable in the response of Petros, who viewed federal reunification strictly from an anti-capitalist lens. While he stated his support for federalism, the federal model was not presented by Petros as an ideal, but only preferable in comparison to other alternatives:

> I consider the model we have now [federation] to be better than the alternatives of a unitary state or of partition/two-state solution. Of course, I don't consider it an ideal solution either, as it interprets, organizes, and defines the world based on capitalist criteria, bourgeois institutions and ideals. Despite all this, I would support such a solution as a small step towards the unification of the island's working class. However, I think that a solution that originates from above lacks not only any value, but can become very dangerous, if there are no social processes for peace that originate from below (Petros, Greek Cypriot, Male).

In Petros' response we can again see a clear preference for the island's reunification, as well as a rejection of majoritarianism, and thus a preference of communal autonomy, since the prospect of a unitary state is simply dismissed, placed on the same level of desirability as that of formalised partition. Nonetheless, the perspective articulated by Petros highlights one of the key fundamental differences between Cypriotist perspectives, on the one hand, and alternative non-nationalist perspectives, on the other. Where most responses place the two ethnic communities at the centre, supporting their unity and reunification in the social and political sphere through their entrenchment as autonomous political units within the mechanisms of the state, Petros' perspective does not, placing instead class at the forefront – a category which does not include the two ethnic communities in their totality, nor is strictly restricted to them. Petros' views are identical with the more radical expressions of the communist left, which prioritise class over other forms of identity, envisioning a world beyond the class distinctions characterising capitalist modernity. The entry point here is that of class, and federalism is thus perceived favourably by Petros because it could unify the working-class of the island under one state structure, rather than due to the entrenchment of communal autonomy itself.

8.3. Perceptions on the Continuation of Partition

Dominant discourses in Greek Cypriot society emphasise the intransigence of Turkey as the key factor for the perpetuation of the island's de-facto partition (Anastasiou 2008b: 240). Such discourses tend to downplay, or simply ignore the intercommunal dimensions of the Cyprus Dispute that are traceable to the 1960s, emphasising instead the effects of the Turkish invasion of 1974, further highlighting the ongoing military presence of Turkish forces on the island (Anastasiou 2008a: 198). From these lenses, Turkey remains ultimately responsible both for the Dispute, which is reframed as primarily the result of the Turkish invasion and ongoing occupation of northern Cyprus, and of the failure to find a political resolution which would reunify Cyprus, negating the ongoing de-facto partition.

In contrast, participants offered a variety of alternative views surrounding the factors enabling the continuity of de-facto partition. While the intransigence of Turkey was mentioned, it was raised only in a small minority of participants' responses and was always presented alongside additional reasons, downplaying its importance as the main factor at play. Thus, rather than attributing the continuation of the status quo to Turkish intransigence, participants primarily focused on nationalism, elite interests, and lack of social pressure as the main factors barring the reunification of Cyprus. The hegemony of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism was raised particularly often in participants' responses. For example, Ektoras highlighted dominant nationalisms as an ever-present factor perpetuating the existing status quo:

> The most timeless factor, however, is nationalism and the state-church relations that strengthen it or even establish it. The adherence to "Greek-Christian ideals"[99] and narratives deprives the state of the will to cooperate with the Turkish Cypriot community and even more importantly deprives the people of the sense of unity, hence, the will for reunification (Ektoras, Greek Cypriot, Male).

In his response, Ektoras emphasises the hegemony of Greek Cypriot nationalism as a long-running factor in barring the island's reunification, characterised by divisive narratives which negatively affect potential co-operation with Turkish Cypriots, both on the level of formal institutions, as well as within broader society. A similar focus on Greek Cypriot nationalism is identifiable in Elias' response, who argued that:

[99] A phrase common in Greek Cypriot nationalist discourse, connecting Orthodox Christianity with Greek nationalism.

> Speaking for the Greek Cypriot part of the country, I would say nationalism, which is perpetuated through the political system, the media and education (Elias, Greek Cypriot, Male).

Both in Ektoras' and Elias' responses, emphasis is placed on the dominant versions of nationalism in Greek Cypriot society, rather than on both sides of the divide, indicating that they identify Greek Cypriot nationalism as more influential than its Turkish Cypriot counterpart in perpetuating the status quo. This was further reflected in the response of Sotiris, who argued that ethnonationalism was a significant force within both communities, but moved on to highlight Greek Cypriot nationalism in particular:

> Another important reason that reunification of Cyprus is difficult to be achieved, is the ethnonationalism sentiments of a significant portion of the population on both sides. This is especially evident in the government-controlled school curriculum in the south that highlights, justifies, and normalises the division between the two communities by examining recent and relevant historical events through a nationalistic lens (Sotiris, Greek Cypriot, Male).

Nonetheless, other participants did attribute the perpetuation of partition to the hegemonic nationalisms in both communities. This has already been reflected in participants' responses surrounding historical responsibility, which were presented in the previous chapter, such as those of Maria and Katerina, which emphasised the reproduction of adversarial national narratives within each ethnic community through public education. Similarly, Max argued that de-facto partition was perpetuated by:

> The nationalisms in both communities. The influence of the motherlands who want, for their political economic interests, to maintain control over the island, keeping it divided with one part purely Greek Orthodox and the other Turkish and Muslim. Political forces do not want to share power, as it would reduce their corruption (Max, Greek Cypriot, genderqueer).

Max repeated the position that dominant forms of nationalism perpetuate the existing division, adding that Greece and Turkey further support the continuation of the status quo due to their own interests. Nonetheless, the reference which Max makes to corruption, reflects the second most prevalent factor highlighted by participants, the existence of economic and political elites benefiting from the existing status quo, and therefore opposing the

reunification of the island under a federal structure. For example, Maria highlighted both private economic interests and ethnic antagonism in her response:

> The unwillingness to cooperate, as well as the unwillingness to solve the Cyprus dispute due to having benefited from the division, are big factors that prevent reunification. Why would Greek Cypriot politicians who are investors in property development in Protaras and Agia Napa,[100] want reunification? Why would corrupt politicians want reunification of Cyprus when they could be making millions from their dirty Golden Passport[101] "business"? And how could the president(s) cooperate with Turkish Cypriots if they still consider them as a minority, as inferior, as the enemy or friend of the enemy? In my opinion, Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots are just Cypriots. Developments might have been completely different if both parties discussed whilst having this perception. Greek Cypriots need to also realise that what we have now is two fucking states and a massive Turkish army on the north part of Cyprus. Even though the TRNC is not recognised by the rest of the world now, it will be legitimised if no solution is found. We do not have the upper hand; we lost the war. What we need to do for everyone's benefit, is compromise, try and minimise the damage (Maria, Greek Cypriot, Female).

Thus, for Maria private economic interests and corruption, particularly amongst Greek Cypriot political elites, is a detrimental factor for the maintenance of de-facto partition. This view was common among participants, who primarily emphasized the interests of Greek Cypriot elites in their responses. Sotiris, for example, argued along similar lines, noting that:

> One of the most important reasons that the reunification of Cyprus is obstructed in my opinion is the unwillingness of the leaders of both communities to go against the status quo. To reach any form of solution would be detrimental to the corruption that has been fundamentally ingrained in both sides of the island. In other words, and this is something I feel strongly about for the Greek Cypriot side, the very people that

[100] Protaras and Ayia Napa are key tourist areas in the Famagusta district of the Republic.

[101] This refers to the Republic of Cyprus' citizenship-by-investment program, which enabled foreign nationals to acquire Cypriot citizenship by investing in Cyprus, typically within the property market. It came under heavy criticism in 2020-21, following the release of footage from Al Jazeera showing high-ranking officials engaging in illicit practices for the granting of passports (Al Jazeera Investigative Unit 2020), and the subsequent publication of the findings of an official inquiry, which concluded that the government was consistently issuing passports illegally (Kambas 2021).

> have been assigned to find a solution are acting against it, as this would go against their own personal interests as individuals (Sotiris, Greek Cypriot, Male).

While placing responsibility initially on the political leadership of both communities, this responsibility is shifted towards the Greek Cypriot leadership, which is attributed personal interests benefiting from the existing status quo, rather than from reunification, leading to their unwillingness in consenting to an agreement reunifying the island. The emphasis on the Greek Cypriot leadership appears in other responses, such as that of Ektoras, who stated that:

> I believe that the main factors preventing the reunification of Cyprus are based on different pillars. Almost all of these pillars, however, have to do with interests smaller than national ones, that is, individual interests, or interests limited to small, privileged groups in society (Ektoras, Greek Cypriot, Male).

Ektoras moved on to historicise his argument, noting that during the British colonial period, the colonial administration influenced and manipulated the local population towards ethnic antagonism, a strategy utilised to safeguard its own economic interests. Drawing on this background as a parallel, Ektoras moved on to argue that:

> Likewise, mainly economic interests are what motivate the actors who want Cyprus divided on both sides of the divide. In the part of the island controlled by the Republic of Cyprus, the extensive powers given to the current president and the absence of control over government institutions are based on the "Doctrine of Necessity", which stems from the ongoing division. Dozens of businessmen got rich from a range of activities, legitimate and illegitimate, using "relaxations" in legislation and the functioning of the state that these same individuals seamlessly manipulate. A typical example is our inclusion in the list of the ten countries with the most flags on ships (flag of opportunity – extremely relaxed sailing laws combined with international recognition), among countries that either face huge chronic problems of poverty, institutional corruption, or dictatorship (Ektoras, Greek Cypriot, Male).

Like Sotiris, Ektoras focused primarily on the Greek Cypriot political and economic elites, arguing that the ongoing de-facto partition relates to their corresponding interests, which are dependent on the continuation of the status quo. As these interests are argued to be founded upon political power currently afforded to the political elite due to the suspension of the bi-communal provisions found in the 1960 constitution, reunification remains undesirable, since

such an outcome, by reinstating bi-communalism, would erode the foundations of power for the Greek Cypriot elite. In his response, Andreas expressed a similar perspective, arguing that:

> I believe the main factor preventing the reunification of Cyprus is the partitionist attitude of the political-economic elites of the two sides, mainly the Greek Cypriot side, which, through de-facto partition, can hold the monopoly of the official and recognized state, essentially ruling alone. Looking at the prospect of federal reunification, the Greek Cypriot elite will be the main losers (Andreas, Greek Cypriot, Male).

For Andreas, reunification is thus a prospect going against the interests of the Greek Cypriot elite, resulting in an unwillingness of reaching a consensual solution in inter-communal negotiations. Like Ektoras, Andreas notes that the control of the Republic of Cyprus by the Greek Cypriot community has created vested interests for the maintenance of the existing status quo, interests which would be undermined in a scenario of federal reunification. Similarly, Petros noted Greek Cypriot economic and political interests connected to the status quo, as a key reason for its continuation:

> [E]conomic and political interests behind the non-solution. For example, the businessmen in "free Famagusta"[102] and Paphos, who are afraid of losing tourism, and political careers built on non-solution (Petros, Greek Cypriot, Male).

In her response, Artemis argued that the existing division served the interests of the political elites of both communities, which provided them with access to political power, as well as the legitimization of their structural position in the existing political hierarchy, through the perpetuation of ethnic antagonism:

> On the state level (i.e., the governments in the north and the south) division is in their interest, in order to perpetuate the state of exception and their internal control, by forming external enemies. The Church of Cyprus is an additional part of the problem, as within a Greek-Orthodox state it can control the government through the votes of the citizens. Moreover, the elites of the two communities are comfortable with the

[102] As the district of Famagusta remains partitioned, the term ‘free Famagusta’ is sometimes employed in Greek Cypriot discourse to describe the areas of the district remaining under the control of the Republic of Cyprus.

> situation as it is, as they can control the centers of power (Artemis, Greek Cypriot, Female).

Nonetheless, several participants raised as an additional reason the absence of social pressure in support of the island's reunification. Petros, for example, noted that there is a "lack of social pressure from below, as the reunification movement shrinks while voices in favour of a two-state solution increase" (Petros, Greek Cypriot, Male). Artemis discussed this lack more extensively, arguing that:

> [M]ost people in both communities are comfortable with the status quo and prefer to stay in this transitional stage forever. Somewhere between a solution and non-solution. This particular status quo facilitates especially individuals who separate people from each other based on socially constructed distinctions. They prefer to be in a "pure" community, to not have Others, with different customs, beliefs, and languages. Not solving the Cyprus Problem is also convenient because you cannot regret the decision to solve it. It is an easier, no effort practice. If the people of Cyprus really wanted it to be resolved, then the mobilizations from below would pressure for this. But we see nothing but spasmodic actions from quaint individuals [γραφικών] (Artemis, Greek Cypriot, Female).

The absence of grassroots mobilisations pressuring for federal reunification is thus argued to reflect a broader normalisation of the status quo, consolidated in the acceptance of mono-communal state structures entrenching demarcating lines of inclusion and exclusion between the two communities. This view is again reflected in Andreas' response, who stresses however that this normalisation is primarily taking place within Greek Cypriot society:

> Another factor that I consider important is the normalization of the division in the younger generations, with the result being that the Cyprus issue is not a priority, in an already de-politicized society. This factor again corresponds mainly with Greek Cypriot society, rather than the Turkish Cypriot one. I believe that the multi-level isolation experienced by Turkish Cypriot society pushes it to have a more positive idea of reunification (Andreas, Greek Cypriot, Male).

For Andreas, the social conditions found in each community affect broader perspectives surrounding reunification, noting that the exclusion experienced by the Turkish Cypriot community makes Turkish Cypriot support towards reunification more widespread. In

contrast, Andreas argues that Greek Cypriots do not view reunification as a pressing political issue. The absence of generalized social pressure towards reunification was also addressed by Maria, who nonetheless attributed to it multiple factors:

> A big, united front comprised of pro-unification individuals could apply pressure on the politicians. Yet, this does not happen and there's various reasons for that. People have lost hope after almost 50 years and several political disappointments, people see that the government is corrupt, and that justice does not exist, just self-motivated actions, many are not well educated and do not understand the consequences of a non-solution, many displaced people who were directly affected are now dead, the new generations [have no] lived experiences of the issue hence are distant, there's a rise in nationalism, there is a rise in political apathy. Some of the above are interrelated but the fact that we do not have a strong active and quick-reacting pro-unification group is a huge loss for all Cypriots (Maria, Greek Cypriot, Female).

Thus, the interpretations offered by participants on the continuation of de-facto partition diverge extensively from dominant political discourse. Differences are not to be found merely on the particular factors raised, but on the tendency to emphasise social relations and dynamics within Greek Cypriot society, rather than Cypriot society as a whole. Greek Cypriot nationalism, for example, is more consistently addressed than its Turkish Cypriot counterpart, while the emphasizing of special interests focused primarily on power relations found within the Greek Cypriot community, attributes the continuation of partition to the unwillingness of the Greek Cypriot political and economic elite to concede and share power with the Turkish Cypriot community. The perpetuation of partition is not attributed to dynamics found within the Greek Cypriot community in absolute terms, as the responses discussing the absence of broader social pressure indicate. Nonetheless, the responses indicate a heightened assignment of responsibility on social and political actors in Greek Cypriot society. This heighted attribution of responsibility suggests that conflicting interpretations over Greek Cypriot responsibility for the development of the Dispute are not merely reserved for the historical past, but further extend unto the present, as part of narratives aiming to explain the continuity of the island's partition.

8.4. Concluding Remarks

The uncompromising support for federalism raised in the collected data reflects broader themes explored throughout the thesis, intersecting with opposition to hegemonic forms of nationalism, alternative historical narrations, and conceptions over identity. Presented as the vehicle for the materialisation of the island's reunification, federalism is perceived as key in the struggle against Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism, as a pivotal moment for their displacement from their position of hegemony, enabling the transition towards an alternative, non-exclusionary reunified Cyprus. Nonetheless, support for federalism is not merely derived from this negative relation to hegemonic forms of nationalism, but acquires its own positive content, in the rejection of majoritarianism and parallel support of bi-communalism and communal autonomy.

Opposition to majoritarianism acquires its meaning in relation to historical narrations examined in the previous chapter, which assign responsibility to the Greek Cypriot community for the development of the conflict, connecting it to the overtaking of the state during the 1960s. The direct rejection of a majoritarian form of governance is argued in relation to this historical context, representing it as undesirable even prior to the de-facto partition of the island in 1974, highlighting the rejection of any state structure that enables the political domination of one community over the other. It is precisely because federalism is perceived as a hindrance to such a development; that it is perceived as desirable for the reunification of Cyprus.

The assignment of responsibility to the Greek Cypriot community reappears, in a different form, in the heightened attribution for the perpetuation of the status quo on dynamics found within Greek Cypriot society. These perceptions, which place their focus on the hegemony of adversarial nationalisms, the interest of economic and political elites, and the absence of pressure from broader sections of society, demonstrate, in parallel, a broader rejection of dominant narratives over the development, but perhaps more importantly, over the perpetuation of the Cyprus Dispute. Thus, it is not merely narration over the past that is disputed, but contemporary dominant explanations over the failure to achieve the island's reunification.

Support for federalism is therefore not merely connected to the prospect of reunification, but also to the perceived desirability of the principle of bi-communality, where each community would be codified as a political community having equitable power over the decision-making

process, with communal autonomy constitutionally entrenched. This is most directly expressed in the repeated presentation of federalism as the ideal for a reunified Cyprus, rather than as a potentiality emerging through the need of political compromise. Support for reunification is thus at the very same time presented as a definite, direct statement of support for a particular form of state structure, encompassing within it the formal recognition of the two communities as equal and autonomous political subjects. This preference is itself connected with broader claims over notions of identity, connecting federalism, with its bi-communalism and communal autonomy, with the formation of a common political and social space enabling inter-communal collaboration, argued to eventually or potentially lead to the formation of alternative, non-exclusionary identities, in parallel to the displacing of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism from their position of hegemony. In other words, federalism, in Cypriotist discourse, is intrinsically connected with the transition towards a heterogeneous, pluralistic Cypriot identity.

9. Discussion of Key Findings

This chapter discusses the findings outlined in the preceding chapters in relation to the available literature on Cypriotism, providing answers to the two research questions that have guided the thesis. After reintroducing the definition of Cypriotism located in Chapter 2, it moves on to examine each research question independently, noting the points of convergence and divergence between the findings of this thesis and the available literature, highlighting the key contributions of the thesis. The chapter further examines four 'types' of nationalism proposed in the field of nationalism studies, contrasting them with the key findings, exploring the extent to which Cypriotism corresponds and divergences from these four 'types'. Noting that Cypriotism cannot be adequately described through these categories, the chapter concludes by proposing the concept of 'multicommunal nationalism' as a new sub-category of nationalism, outlining its five key characteristics.

9.1. Revisiting Our Definition and Research Questions

While rooting its definition of Cypriotism within the available literature, utilising the definition offered by Caesar Mavratsas (1997: 721), the thesis sought to update the definition by incorporating various subsequent contributions to the study of Cypriotism present in the relevant literature. Therefore, the thesis has employed a modified definition of Cypriotism, which has been defined as:

> An ideology which argues that Cyprus has its own *sui generis* character and, thus, must be viewed as a *unified political entity* which is independent from both the motherlands of the two main communities of the island, that is, Greece and Turkey, while *also being irreducible to either of the two main communities culturally, historically or politically.*

The definition aimed to avoid repeating key limitations located in the literature, which conflated the post-1974 versions of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism with Cypriotism (Loizides 2007: 172). At the same time, the definition purposely avoided defining Cypriotism as a nationalist ideology a priori, leaving the sui generis character of Cyprus undefined, rather than reducing it to a specific set of political, cultural, or historical claims. Maintaining a more open definition aimed to facilitate our inquiry into Cypriotism, by

leaving Cypriotism's ideological content to be determined by empirical data, rather than by conceptual presuppositions. The thesis was guided by the following two key research questions, addressing two interrelated, but distinct dimensions surrounding Cypriotism:

1. To what extent does Cypriotism act as an alternative and as a challenge to Greek Cypriot nationalism?
2. Is Cypriotism an alternative to nationalism, or a variant expression of it?

The first research question aimed to explore the points of difference between Cypriotism and Greek Cypriot nationalism, exploring the extent to which the former acts as a challenge to the fundamental claims, positions and perspectives of the latter. The question aimed to further examine Cypriotism in the context within it has developed, by contrasting the claims and views it expresses in relation to the hegemonic ideology present in the Republic of Cyprus. In contrast, the second research question was utilised to explore whether Cypriotism entails the characteristics which are ascribed to nationalism within nationalism studies, or if it presents a genuine alternative to nationalism itself.

9.2. Challenging Greek Cypriot Nationalism

The literature surrounding Cypriotism has often emphasised the meta-ethnic character of the ideology, arguing that Cypriotist expressions propose a sense of Cypriotness that does not centre on cultural considerations, prioritising a civic identity over and above existing ethnic identities, without necessarily directly challenging and opposing them (Mavratsas 1998: 86). Notably, Nicos Peristianis argued that Cypriotism and Greek Cypriot nationalism correspond to diametrically opposed positions, with the former prioritising loyalty to the state, and the latter loyalty to the national group (2008: 2). The findings of this thesis stand in contradiction with such an interpretation. While we can here reconfirm that Cypriotism rejects ethnicity as a central element of Cypriot identity, the senses of Cypriotness explored in this thesis place culture, rather than civic considerations, at the centre of their articulation. Cypriot identity is conceptualised and claimed as culturally heterogeneous, pluralistic and inclusive, at the very same moment as it is represented as different from Greece and Turkey, demarcating this difference in cultural, rather than civic terms.

The claimed differentiation from Greece and Turkey is further extended to a parallel challenging and rejection of Greek and Turkish national identity, with Cypriotness placed in

an antagonistic relation to them, opposing their corresponding national imagined communities. The centrality of culture is expressed more directly in the evocation of local language varieties as identity markers differentiating Cyprus from Greece and Turkey, as the claim of difference is directly related to culture, rather than civic allegiance. Thus, the evocation of Cypriotness does not act as an accommodation of conflictual ethnic identities but is itself a claim to an alternative competing cultural identity, displacing the centrality placed upon Greek and Turkish identification within Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism, disconnecting Cyprus from Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalist meta-narratives surrounding the island's ethnic and national character. Rather than accommodating Greekness and Turkishness through the evocation of a culturally thin, minimalist civic identity, claims to Cypriotness offer an alternative mode of imagination, where the ethnic and cultural homogeneity entailed in Greek and Turkish national identity are both challenged and rejected, representing Cyprus, both historically and culturally, as a pluralistic; rather than as a monocultural space.

A common interpretation located in the literature further presents Cypriotism as an ideology stressing identification with an independent Cypriot polity, over and above the identification with the Greek or Turkish nation (Mavratsas 1998: 86). The centrality ascribed towards identification with the state is not reflected in the thesis' findings, as neither the responses of participants, nor the political discourses examined, stressed existing state structures in their claiming of Cyprus' sui generis character. Cyprus is indeed claimed as autonomous and independent from Greece and Turkey, but this claim does not correspond to an identification with the state itself, but rather with the island, which is signified as an abstract political category divorced conceptually from Greece and Turkey, entailing its own unique cultural characteristics, reflected in the claiming of a Cypriot identity corresponding to the territory of the island itself. Taking into consideration the extent to which Cypriotist positions challenge the existing de-facto partition of the island, as well as the abolishment of bi-communality in the post-1964 Republic of Cyprus, this observation, while being novel, is not necessarily surprising, as no state presently existing on the island corresponds to the perspectives and vision articulated by Cypriotism.

Past academic research has tended to stress the inclusive dimensions of Cypriotism, noting how Cypriotist positions entail progressive values, such as anti-racism and cultural tolerance (Trimikliniotis 1999, Rakopoulos 2022: 8-9), as well as the embracing of Turkish Cypriots within Greek Cypriot Cypriotist senses of belonging (Peristianis 2008: 249). The findings of

the thesis reconfirm the presence of these ideological elements in Cypriotism, as support of cultural pluralism and tolerance, as well as opposition to racism, were consistently present in the collected data, reflected both in claims surrounding Cypriotness, and in representations of population groups located outside of the Greek Cypriot community. Nonetheless, the thesis has further highlighted the exclusionary dynamics embedded in Cypriotism, noting how the category of the 'Cypriot people' is discursively constituted through the drawing of demarcating lines of inclusion and exclusion in relation to different population groups. While Turkish Cypriots are represented as an integral part to the category of the 'Cypriot people', with the community represented as politically equal to the Greek Cypriot community, this representation is not extended to other population groups. Notably, the Cypriot Roma, while represented as Cypriot citizens, are not in parallel claimed as integral to the category, while migrant populations, while perceived positively, are designated as clear outsiders to the category of the 'Cypriot people'.

In contrast to the Cypriot Roma and the migrant population, individuals subsumed under the category of the 'settler' are represented overwhelmingly negatively and signified as outsiders, confirming recent findings in the literature observing that settlers continue to be perceived as "abject denizens of the North" (Rakopoulos 2022: 23) in the Republic of Cyprus. Perhaps more interestingly, we can note here that this mode of representation demonstrates a certain convergence with Turkish Cypriot versions of Cypriotism, characterised as they are by the clear exclusion of Turkish mainlanders (Gülseven 2020: 35). This convergence does not, however, emerge from identical ideological positions. While Turkish Cypriot Cypriotism locates the settlers as the internal other of Turkish Cypriots, usually through the unfoldment of an orientalist, and at times xenophobic discourse (Hatay 2008: 147, Gülseven 2020: 35), the exclusion of the settlers from Greek Cypriot Cypriotist senses of belonging rests fundamentally on political considerations, identifying the population with a perceived Turkish colonial policy perceived to be in place since 1974. The exclusionary dynamics of Cypriotism can further be observed in the representation of local language varieties as identity markers of a pluralistic Cypriotness, as the claimed language varieties correspond to population groups commonly understood as being historically rooted in the island, while language varieties commonly spoken by migrants are not claimed as part of this evoked Cypriotness. Thus, the category of the 'Cypriot people' is not merely restricted in relation to membership, but in terms of its claimed cultural characteristics as well.

As the literature surrounding Greek Cypriot Cypriotism has not sufficiently explored such exclusionary dynamics, focusing primarily on the subsumption of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots under a common Cypriot identity, the crystallised image of Cypriotism in academic work has tended to present the ideology as inherently inclusive, tolerant and pluralistic. The findings of this thesis paint a more complicated picture, demonstrating that Cypriotism is not characterised by a mere extension of inclusiveness, or by a general dedication towards an unrestricted cultural pluralism. Rather, Cypriotism presents a reconceptualization of the demarcating lines between insiders and outsiders, with the category of the 'Cypriot people' entailing within it parallel processes of inclusion and exclusion. Thus, while Cypriotism formulates an imagined community that is more flexible than its Greek Cypriot nationalist counterpart, this imagined community remains restrictive, placing limits to its membership, in turn connecting this membership with a specific set of cultural elements, as well as with the territory of the island itself.

Cypriotism, as such, presents an alternative to the hegemonic version of nationalism in the Republic of Cyprus, challenging Greek Cypriot nationalism on multiple interrelated levels. The most immediate challenge is reflected in the promotion of an imagined community that stands in direct contradiction with the Hellenic imagined community accompanying Greek Cypriot nationalism, as Cypriotism incorporates in its mode of imagination both ethnic communities, at the very same moment as it constrains its imagined community to the territory of the island itself, dissociating Cyprus from Greece (and Turkey). The national imagination of Greek Cypriot nationalism is thus directly opposed, with the Greek Cypriot community no longer being conceived as an integral part of a larger Greek national group, but as a part of broader multicultural Cypriot people, with the two modes of imagination remaining fundamentally irreconcilable. Their incompatibility, however, is not merely restricted to the population groups that each imagined community includes or excludes. Since each position makes distinctly different claims surrounding cultural identity, producing conflictual understandings in relation to the character of the island, Cypriotism's evocation of a pluralistic (Cypriot) identity is also diametrically opposed to the mode of imagination characterising Greek Cypriot nationalism.

While Greek Cypriot nationalism stresses cultural homogeneity, mono-communalism and linguistic singularity in its formulation of a Greek (Cypriot) national identity, Cypriotism emphasizes cultural heterogeneity, pluralism and bi-communalism in its formulations of Cypriotness. Thus, the two ideologies do not reflect alternative visions of a homogenised

national identity, but express different conceptions surrounding the notion of national identity itself. This differentiation becomes immediately observable when we begin to examine the symbolic and political claims emerging from Cypriotism. In relation to the politics surrounding language, for example, what is expressed is not a desire to replace Modern Standard Greek with the Cypriot Greek language variety, keeping intact the prioritisation of a single language variety, but the reorganisation of the symbolism afforded to language, through the recognition and appreciation of multiple language varieties as inherently Cypriot, a perspective which does not merely challenge the privileged position of Greek culture within the Republic of Cyprus, but mono-communalism and cultural homogeneity in general.

Representing Cypriot identity as incompatible with a homogenised Greek national identity, expressions of Cypriotism tend to avoid openly declaring fixed points of exclusion and inclusion for belonging to the imagined community of the 'Cypriot people', in contrast to Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism, which maintain entrenched boundaries to inclusivity. While this thesis has demonstrated that such fixed points do in fact exist, it should be recognised that these boundaries appear more flexible in the case of Cypriotism, since the ideology remains in a counter-hegemonic position, developing on the grassroots level, while in parallel incorporating principles of cultural tolerance, multiculturalism, and anti-racism. As Cypriotism has not been entrenched within the ideological mechanisms of the state, we can expect that the demarcating lines of exclusion and inclusion will remain blurred, reflecting the contextual concerns and dynamics of grassroots, extra-parliamentary politicisation.

The evoked cultural pluralism characterising Cypriotism takes its most consistent form in its committed support towards bi-communalism, which further challenges fundamental claims expressed by Greek Cypriot nationalism. Central to this support is the claiming of Turkish Cypriots as a collectivity politically equal to the Greek Cypriot community, a perspective intersecting with conceptions surrounding citizenship, political legitimacy, and the state. Placing the two communities on an equal political footing contests majoritarian political perspectives over governance, challenging the majority-minority schema characterising Greek Cypriot nationalism (Mavratsas 2010: 208). The rejection of majoritarianism enables the articulation of counter-narrations challenging the legitimisation of Greek Cypriot historical aims and grievances, opposing in parallel the representation of the Greek Cypriot community as the sole genuine historical inhabitants of the island (Charalambous 2007: 213). The recognition of the Turkish Cypriot community as an equal and integral part of the broader category of the 'Cypriot people' further provides the conceptual framework through

which the claimed historical and contemporary legitimacy of Greek Cypriot nationalism can be challenged, giving rise to alternative interpretations surrounding the unfoldment of the Cyprus Dispute. By rejecting the ethicality of majoritarianism and by emphasising the historical suffering of Turkish Cypriots as fllow victims of the conflict, the legitimacy of the mono-communal, post-1964 Republic of Cyprus is questioned, presented as the outcome of a cycle of ethnic violence unleashed by one community into the other.

This reinterpretation of the past finds itself reaffirmed in the envisioning of a reunified political future. The support afforded towards bi-communal federalism remains rooted in a rejection of majoritarianism, promoting an alternative vision for the institutional structures and ideological content of the Cypriot polity. Rather than being viewed as a political structure reflecting the post-1974 power dynamics on the island, federalism is signified as an ideal institutional arrangement that is inseparable from the rejection of majoritarian modes of governance, with majoritarianism remaining intrinsically linked to the historical violence inflicted upon the Turkish Cypriot community following the collapse of bi-communalism in 1964. The envisioning of a bi-communal federal Cyprus is not articulated merely in negative terms, but acquires its own positive content, with its envisioned structures reflecting broader notions surrounding citizenship. Support towards the institutionalisation of communal political equality echoes the representation of Turkish Cypriots as a political community equal to the Greek Cypriot community, whose status should be reflected in the structures of the state. Similarly, the formal entrenchment of federal communal autonomy is presented as an inherently positive and welcoming development, able to preserve not merely the unity of Cyprus, but also the cultural autonomy of the two communities, barring the possibility of one community dominating over the other.

Little attention has been placed on the political and ideological content that is ascribed to reunification within Cypriotist political positions. It should thus be highlighted that Cypriotism is not merely concerned with the island's reunification, but further envisions an alternative form for the nation-state that is irreconcilable with the core political ideas and principles historically and currently present in Greek Cypriot nationalism, in parallel delegitimising the political arrangement codified in the post-1964 Republic of Cyprus. This dimension appears to be recognised within Cypriotist circles, where the materialisation of a reunified bi-communal federal Cyprus is often presented as the pivotal moment in the struggle against Greek Cypriot nationalism. It is worth pointing out that the envisioning of an alternative form for the nation-state is intertwined with the continuous presence of the Cyprus

Dispute, whose non-resolution simultaneously entails the continuation of the status quo and therefore, in a paradoxical way, also maintains the potentiality of the island's federal reunification.

Cypriotism therefore presents multiple challenges to Greek Cypriot nationalism, presenting a series of alternative interpretations and understandings in relation to (Cypriot) identity, collective belonging, local culture, historical narration, reunification, and the nation-state. Under the various interrelated layers of critique present in Cypriotist positions, perspectives and discourses, we can however note that Cypriotism presents a broader, more fundamental challenge to Greek Cypriot nationalism. By maintaining a continuous point of critique to its hegemony, Cypriotism halts the embedment of Greek Cypriot nationalism into social, political and everyday life, preventing its transfiguration into the banal expression of nationalism that has been described by Michael Billig (1995).[103] As Ivana Spasić observed in her analysis of nationalism in post-Yugoslav Serbia, banal nationalism cannot readily crystallise within a context where national identity remains a central topic of discussion and dispute (2017: 41), placing nationalism at the forefront of everyday social and political debate (2017: 42). We can here reconfirm Spasić's insights, noting, however, that unlike contemporary Serbia, where debates and discussions largely express competing visions and perspectives over the Serbian nation, the contestation between Cypriotism with Greek/Turkish Cypriot nationalism does not reflect different visions surrounding the past, present and future of the same nation, but reflect, in contrast, an antithetical and irreconcilable set of perspectives over the constitution of the national group itself.

9.3. Conceptualising Cypriotism as Nationalism

Providing an adequate answer to the second research question is a rather more complicated matter. As Ceasar Mavratsas noted, Cypriotists commonly object to being labelled as nationalists (1997: 723).[104] Since in Cyprus the term 'nationalism' has been firmly connected with its Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot variants, Cypriotists, as opponents of these

[103] While not utilizing the concept of 'banal nationalism', this observation has already been made by Yiannis Papadakis, who noted that "[i]f anything unites Greek Cypriots in a community, it is their participation in a debate about what constitutes the nation, not some shared conception of 'the nation.'" (Papadakis 1998: 162).

[104] We can further note here than even the term 'Cypriotist' has fallen out of fashion, with most individuals describing themselves using other terms, such as 'anti-nationalist' or 'reunificationist'.

ideological currents, understand themselves to be anti-nationalists and refuse to describe or accept the label for their positions, leading to a typical example where the theoretical meaning of a term contrasts sharply with the contextual meaning that has been assigned to it. This observation should not however obstruct us from critically exploring Cypriotism as a nationalist ideology, if Cypriotism, as a set of ideas, corresponds to the conceptual and theoretical frameworks employed in the study of nationalism.

Cypriotism fits well within Benedict Anderson's definition of the nation as an imagined political community that is "imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign" (2006: 6). As Anderson clarified, communities "are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined" (2006: 6), noting that for national communities, this style of imagination is inherently limiting, entailing "finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations" (2006: 7). These boundaries in turn limit the nation territorially and conceptually, maintaining disputable, but nonetheless limiting criteria for belonging to the imagined community. In Cypriotism, this style of imagination is reflected in the confined identification with the territory of the island as an abstract political category, as well as with the identification of the two communities as constituent parts of a native Cypriot population corresponding to that political category. The vision of a bi-communal, or even a multicommunal Cypriot people, united under both an overarching identity and a single independent state, further reflects this mode of imagination, as it sets boundaries in relation to the membership of the national group, which is, in turn, connected with an identified territory and a corresponding state. In so far as Cypriotism maintains as its central political aim the reunification of Cyprus under a single bi-communal state structure, it further corresponds with Ernest Gellner's definition of nationalism as "primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent" (1983: 1).

The literature surrounding Cypriotism has typically classified it as an expression of civic nationalism, an interpretation which has persisted in later academic work (Mavratsas 1998: 88, Peristianis 2000: 187, Gülseven 2020: 22, Rakopoulos 2022: 14). The findings of this thesis contradict such an assessment, which overlooks the extent to which Cypriotism depends upon cultural considerations for the designation of Cyprus' sui generis character, the centrality assigned to cultural markers for the demarcation of difference from Greece and Turkey, as well as the exclusionary dimensions located in Cypriotist discourse, which place local migrant population groups outside of the category of the 'Cypriot people'. Another point of disjuncture between the concept of 'civic nationalism' and the empirical findings of

this thesis concern the centrality assigned by civic nationalism to the state. While civic nationalism presupposes the attachment of the citizenry to its corresponding polity (Brown 1999: 283), Cypriotism is aiming instead to fundamentally transform it – if Cypriotism expresses any attachment to the state at all, it is towards an imagined reunified Cypriot polity, rather than the state structure presently corresponding to the Republic of Cyprus.

A less prominent interpretation located in the literature has viewed Cypriotism, as well as the Cypriotness which it invokes, as a cultural identity incompatible with, and alternative to nationalism (Panayiotou et al. 2022: 457). This perspective reiterates a key claim located at the heart of Cypriotist ideology, the conviction that it is fundamentally anti-national in character. As it has already been argued above, the findings of this thesis cannot sustain such an interpretation, since Cypriotism exhibits multiple characteristics that make it compatible with a theoretical understanding of nationalism. The logic enabling the representation of Cypriotism as an alternative to nationalism should not be sought within the ideology alone, but also in the peculiar political relations specific to the island. As the term ‘nationalism’ has become equated with the hegemonic, dominant politics at play, the critiquing of those politics has in turn been accompanied with an almost absolute rejection of the term. Thus, in Cypriotist formulations of anti-nationalism, what is critiqued and opposed is the particular, contextual form of nationalism that has come to dominate Cypriot political life, rather than nationalism in a theoretical, abstract sense.

This ideological dimension has been reflected in each empirical chapter, with participants’ responses and extracts from collected documents entailing a consistent rejection of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism, relating their articulated perceptions, positions and views through an antagonistic, negative relation to them. Drawing an analogy with Theodor Adorno’s insight that there is a “central delusion” (2006: 106) located in the concept of the ‘nation’, rooted in its need to actively misrepresent itself as a natural, ahistorical category in order to come into existence, we can note here that a central delusion is similarly identifiable in the ideology of Cypriotism, in so far as it must misrepresent itself as being located outside of the phenomenon of nationalism, and in a radical confrontation with it, for it to be able to formulate its political positions, visions, and critiques. Turning to Gellner’s insights for one last time, we can here note that Cypriotism, like all nationalisms, "is not what it seems, and above all it is not what it seems to itself" (1983: 56).

It could be tempting to interpret Cypriotism through the concept of 'ethnic nationalism' instead, focusing on its utilisation of cultural markers for the designation and claiming of a distinct sense of Cypriotness. Nonetheless, several of its key ideological elements are not in harmony with the concept, including the adherence to a progressive, inclusive mode of politics, the absence of a fixated, monocultural sense of national identity and the committed support towards communal political equality and autonomy. Similar limitations can be found when attempting to conceptualise Cypriotism through the concept of 'liberal nationalism', as there is again significant divergence, particularly in relation to perceptions surrounding national culture and the state. While liberal nationalism focuses on minority integration within a broader national majority culture (Dikici 2022: 152), Cypriotism embraces the institutionalisation of a bi-communalism rooted in the rejection of majoritarianism altogether, remaining consistently sceptical and hostile towards the notion of a centralised homogeneous national culture in general.

The concept of 'multicultural nationalism' appears to correspond more appropriately to the ideology of Cypriotism, as we can observe within it a series of elements correlating to the notion of a "remaking of national identity so that all citizens have a sense of belonging" (Modood 2019: 233). This remaking is identifiable, for example, in the re-narration of historical events in a manner encompassing common pain and suffering, in the formulation of a political discourse incorporating the two ethnic communities as constituent parts of the category of the 'Cypriot people', and in the conceptualisation of a notion of Cypriot identity stressing cultural pluralism and inclusiveness. Perhaps more importantly, we can note here how Cypriotist notions of identity are entrenched within a broader ideological framework instilling meaning upon the island's past, present, and future. Rather than producing a cultural thinning, reducing (Cypriot) identity to a signifier of limited meaningfulness, the claim of cultural pluralism fosters a wider sense of collective belonging, reflecting a broader process of cultural thickening, signifying the entrenchment of multiple cultural elements as an embedded characteristic of Cypriot identity, as well as the potentiality for the further expansion of this embedment.

Nonetheless, interpreting Cypriotism as an expression of multicultural nationalism would again necessitate disregarding the ways in which the two differ quite considerably. Multicultural nationalism maintains a commitment towards a national majority culture, enriched through a multicultural thickening emerging via the symbolic and structural integration of cultural minorities. This integration depends upon the maintenance of the

majority culture itself, rather than its displacement from its privileged socio-political position, typically codified through the nation-state. As Tariq Modood has argued, multicultural nationalism entails a rejection of the "pretence of state neutrality", focusing instead on the integration of cultural minorities within the broader majority culture, though the principle "of positive inclusion" (Modood 2019: 239). In contrast, Cypriotist positions unequivocally oppose the predominance of an existing majority culture both symbolically and culturally, but more importantly, politically. The principle here is not one of positive inclusion, but of the entrenchment of political equality between communities, independently of their constitution as cultural majorities or minorities. Cypriotism thus does not aim for the accommodation of a minority culture within a dominant majority culture, but for the fundamental reshaping of their relationship, through their symbolic, cultural and political equalisation. This becomes directly evident in Cypriotist perceptions surrounding reunification and the state, which embrace the materialisation of a state structure ingraining communal equality across its various mechanisms.

Subsuming Cypriotism under any of the outlined 'types' of nationalism, risks reintroducing the same omissions located in the literature surrounding Cypriotism, which, by attaching the concept of 'civic nationalism' to Cypriotism, despite evidence indicating their potential incompatibility, has had the unfortunate effect of blurring, as much as clarifying our understanding of the phenomenon (Pastellopoulos 2022c: 22). Therefore, rather than repeating this pattern by reattaching Cypriotism to a series of concepts appearing inadequate for its conceptualisation, classification and description, I propose the introduction of a new concept, able to appropriately encapsulate the phenomenon as it has been expressed in the empirical findings of this thesis. I will simply name this new concept 'multicommunal nationalism', in order to maintain a level of simplicity and conceptual clarity. Multicommunal nationalism can be effectively summarised as an expression, or 'type' of nationalism, which maintains the following five key characteristics:

1. It envisions an imagined national community, retaining a limit to its membership based on cultural, linguistic, ethnic or civic criteria, while also connecting this imagined community to a specified geographical territory, corresponding to an existing or desired state.
2. It recognises at least two cultural/ethnic/linguistic communities as equal constituent parts of the imagined national community.

3. It rejects the predominance of a majority culture and of a homogenised national identity.
4. It stresses cultural pluralism and heterogeneity as an inherent, or defining characteristic of the claimed national identity.
5. It supports the entrenchment of political equality of at least two cultural/ethnic/linguistic communities, as collectivities, within the institutions of the state.

The adherence to a progressive/liberal mode of politics has been intentionally left out of the defining characteristics of the concept, as it necessarily entails normative judgments surrounding the extent to which a particular political position can be understood as liberal or progressive, within a particular social and political context. The outlined concept should be comprehended strictly as a specific, sub-category of nationalism, rather than as a universal 'type', with its explanatory capacity ultimately being determined by its ability to adequately describe social reality. Thus, the extent to which the concept of 'multicommunal nationalism' can be employed within other contexts should be established through empirical investigation and confirmation, rather than through the imposition of the concept upon relevant, but not necessarily similar phenomena.

9.4. Concluding Remarks

The literature surrounding Cypriotism has been characterised by two distinct interpretations. The first, which remains the dominant paradigm, presents Cypriotism as a form of civic nationalism, exploring its historical presence and ideological content through the ethnic-civic distinction originating in nationalism studies. The second interpretation, which remains the minority view, perceives Cypriotism as a political position promoting a cultural identity located in opposition to nationalism, offering a radical alternative to national imagination and belonging. The findings of this thesis do not support either of these two interpretations. While the thesis reaffirms Cypriotism as an expression of nationalism, its findings are incompatible with the interpretation of Cypriotism as an expression of a civic form of nationalism.

Moving beyond the concept of 'civic nationalism', the chapter explored whether other theorised 'types' of nationalism are appropriate for the conceptualisation of Cypriotism. Outlining converges and deviations of the empirical findings with the concepts of 'ethnic', 'liberal' and 'multicultural nationalism', the chapter concluded by arguing that Cypriotism

cannot be adequately described through the utilisation of these categories. The concept of ‘multicommunal nationalism’ has therefore been introduced as a new sub-category of nationalism, defined through the careful outlining of five key characteristics. The concept has been theorised strictly as a sub-categorisation, with its applicability within other contexts remaining a question of future empirical research.

In conclusion, it is worth briefly noting here the importance of theory in sociological research. Theory should not be merely understood as a tool allowing us to interpret a particular set of collected data but be further recognised as having the capacity to also shape our very research strategies, the kind of data collected, as well as their interpretation, in all stages of social research. Precisely because of this, theory can both facilitate and restrict our sociological endeavours. In the study of nationalism, the extensive employment of definitions which do not allow for sufficient conceptual flexibility faces the risk of essentially misrepresenting the object which it attempts to demystify. What is argued here is not the abandonment of theory for the study of nationalism, but its careful utilization, which presupposes keeping in mind the peculiar political and social context within which nationalist ideology emerges and develops.

10. Conclusion

The Cyprus Dispute has often been portrayed as a political conflict dominated by competing nationalisms, and thus by the national identities, political claims and moral positions emanating from them. Approached from this analytical lens, Cypriotism has been presented as an alternative ideology escaping the logic permeating the conflict, with dominant readings interpreting Cypriotism as a de-ethnicised, civic form of nationalism, divorced from the exclusionary dynamics located at the heart of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism. In contrast, less prominent readings have tended to present Cypriotism as an alternative cultural identity transcending national identification itself, ascribing to Cypriotism a certain degree of radicalism, since Cypriotism is presented as an alternative to national identification on a fundamental, rudimentary level, and therefore as an alternative not merely in form, but also in content.

By exploring expressions of Cypriotism within the Greek Cypriot community during the 21st century, this thesis stands in opposition to both interpretations. Cypriotism presents, unequivocally, an alternative to both Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism, formulating an imagined community that is not merely different, but also incompatible with the imagined communities propagated by its ideological competitors. Nonetheless, and despite the form which Cypriotism has taken in its various articulations and expressions, its ideological content corresponds neither to a civic form of nationalism, nor to an alternative to national imagination as such. While Cypriot identity was often presented by participants as a non-national, inclusive, pluralistic, and culturally heterogenous identity, leaving Cypriotness itself largely undetailed, closer examination identified and explored a series of claims constraining Cypriotness culturally, spatially, and politically. This constraining is apparent on an immediate level through the identification of Cypriotness and Cypriot identity with the territory of the island alone, attaching to the categories a particularism specific to Cyprus, dissociating them from Greece and Turkey. This differentiation is however not reserved merely to geography but is further accompanied by a series of additional claims surrounding culture, demarcating Cypriot identity as fundamentally different to, and thus incompatible with, Greek and Turkish national identity.

Cultural claims are explicitly articulated in Cypriotist perceptions surrounding language use in Cyprus, with Cypriot language varieties being signified as identity markers of differentiation, employed to highlight fundamental dissimilarities between Cyprus, on the one

hand, and Greece and Turkey, on the other, demarcating the island as a culturally autonomous entity. This demarcation is being expressed in two distinct ways, through a bi-communal and a pluralistic perspective, with both perspectives maintaining a similar pattern of representation in relation to the language varieties chosen to be evoked, as in both cases the varieties identified are associated with population groups commonly accepted as native to the island. In contrast, no similar attention is placed upon language varieties spoken by migrant populations. Thus, to the extent that language is evoked as an identity marker for the claiming of a Cypriot identity, its accompanied imagined community corresponds to a finite membership that does not merely differentiate Cypriotness from Greece and Turkey, but also from the non-native population residing on the island.

This mode of differentiation is further evident when unpacking Cypriotist political discourse, as distinct population groups external to the Greek Cypriot community are represented differently in relation to the category of the 'Cypriot people', demarcating distinct levels of inclusion and exclusion. Members of the Turkish Cypriot community are firmly represented as insiders to the category, despite their representation entailing, at points, a certain degree of essentialization, with the community presented on an equal political footing to the Greek Cypriot community. In contrast, the Cypriot Roma are represented primarily as citizens of the Republic, rather than as constituent members of the category itself, while migrant populations, while viewed positively, are nonetheless demarcated as outsiders. Individuals falling under the category of the 'settlers' are represented both negatively and as outsiders to the category, reconfirming recent findings from the literature (Rakopoulos 2022: 23).

The negative representation of settlers indicates a point of convergence between Greek Cypriot Cypriotism and its Turkish Cypriot counterpart, as the latter has largely defined (Turkish) Cypriot identity through a negative relation with the migrant population from Turkey (Gülseven 2020: 35). The (almost) universal absence of addressing the settler population in participants' responses appears to further reconfirm Theodoros Rakopoulos' insight that members of the settler group remain "abject denizens of the North" (Rakopoulos 2022: 23) for most of the Greek Cypriot population residing south of the buffer zone. The demarcation of settlers as outsiders is, however, not accompanied by discursive processes of racialization or by claims of cultural inferiority and superiority, reflecting the general commitment of Cypriotism to cultural tolerance and anti-racism. Rather, those designated as 'settlers' are represented negatively on political grounds, with their presence in northern

Cyprus being viewed as the materialisation of Turkish colonialism and expansionism, at the expense of the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot communities.

The intersection between attachment to topography, demarcation of cultural difference and the conceptualisation of a distinct 'Cypriot people' is readily crystalised in the political demand of Cypriotism for Cyprus' reunification, expressed through the uncompromising support afforded to federalism, with the federal model presented as an ideal institutional arrangement for the island's future reunification. The articulation of this demand is itself founded upon the formulation of alternative narratives surrounding Cypriot history, which challenge Greek Cypriot nationalist narratives over the island's inherent Greekness, offering historicities that place Cypriotness in historical time, producing an alternative political genealogy through the reinterpretation of past historical figures and events. Central to the formulation of alternative historical narrations has been the challenging of hegemonic narratives over victimhood and historical responsibility, accomplished by emphasising the historical suffering experienced by the Turkish Cypriot community, entailing, in turn, the recognition of the Turkish Cypriot dead and missing as fellow victims of the conflict.

By extending historical responsibility for the unfoldment of the Cyprus Dispute to the Greek Cypriot community, Cypriotist historical narrations enable the articulation of a fundamentally different perspective surrounding Cypriot history, offering alternative visions over the island's past, which in turn transform visions and perceptions surrounding its future. Thus, while the rejection of majoritarianism and parallel embracement of federalism reflects the broader rejection of the mono-communalism expressed by Greek Cypriot nationalism, opposition to majoritarian modes of governance is also intrinsically connected to the undesirability of reintroducing state structures entailing the potential of a repeated cycle of ethnic violence. This undesirability is notably, if implicitly, highlighted in alternative historical narrations emphasising the communal violence inflicted upon the Turkish Cypriot community by the Greek Cypriot community, following the collapse of bi-communalism in 1964. Nonetheless, it is worth briefly noting that the assigning of responsibility to the Greek Cypriot community is not merely reserved for the past, but is also evoked in the present, as perceptions surrounding the continuation of the status quo are often accompanied by a highlighting of the social dynamics found within Greek Cypriot society.

The support afforded to the entrenchment of communal political equality within a reunified polity further echoes the representation of Turkish Cypriots as a community of equal political

stature to the Greek Cypriot community, as well as the bi-communal schema surrounding language. Perceived as a constituent, yet autonomous part of the broader category of the 'Cypriot people', the Turkish Cypriot community is not designated as an ethnic or cultural minority, but as an equal political community, whose status should be reflected in the structures of the state. This commitment towards bi-communalism is further reflected in the explicit support expressed for the formal entrenchment of federal communal autonomy, which is welcomed as an inherently positive development, safeguarding both the unity of the island, as well as the cultural autonomy and political equality of the two communities. The overwhelmingly positive perception of bi-communal federalism, which makes Cypriotism stand out from other positions surrounding the resolution of the Cyprus Dispute, is further reinforced by the representation of federal reunification as the pivotal moment in the struggle against Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot nationalism, presenting the materialisation of federalism as a rupture with their present hegemony.

Cypriotism therefore presents a challenge to Greek Cypriot nationalism on multiple levels, by formulating a series of fundamentally different perspectives surrounding (Cypriot) identity, collective belonging, culture, historical narration, and reunification. In doing so, it produces and reproduces an alternative imagined community that is irreconcilable with the key historical and contemporary ideas expressed by Greek Cypriot nationalism, preventing its transfiguration into a banal expression of nationalism. Nonetheless, Cypriotism does not present a radical break with national imagination, precisely because its ideological claims produce a challenge to the contextual, hegemonic forms of nationalism present in Cyprus, rather than formulating a universal critique of nationalism itself.

The recognition of Cypriotism as an alternative form of nationalism indicates that rather than fading away, nationalism, as a socio-political phenomenon, remains entrenched as a dominant political paradigm, to the extent that even 'anti-nationalist' modes of politics produce their political claims, aims, and perspectives through the conceptualisation of national categories, themselves envisioned within the institutional framework of the nation-state. Nonetheless, the case of Cypriotism further indicates a certain malleability embedded in the concept of the 'nation'. While nations are typically represented as static categories in nationalist imagination, entailing an unchanging set of attributes, the emergence and persistence of Cypriotism in contemporary Cyprus suggests that a nation's defining characteristics, membership, and corresponding institutions can be reimagined and challenged to a degree able to produce not merely an alternative national vision, but an alternative conception of the

nation altogether. Thus, while the concept of the ‘nation’ continues to embed itself into contemporary social and political reality, its content can still become a field of fierce ideological contestation, expressing competing claims connected with conflicting perceptions surrounding the preservation, or alteration, of existing socio-political relations.

As this thesis provides a critical evaluation of the ideology dominant in progressive (Greek) Cypriot politics, it will be of interest to Cypriot anti-racist, anti-nationalist, and rapprochement initiatives, particularly in relation to insights highlighting Cypriotism’s exclusionary dimensions, as these dimensions may not be readily apparent to individuals engaging in such initiatives, since Cypriotism presents itself as an inherently anti-nationalist position. The thesis can also inform Cypriot NGOs and citizens' groups engaging in peace-building activities, as it provides a rich array of information surrounding the ideas, visions, and sensitivities underpinning the ideological current most welcoming to inter-communal reconciliation. On a broader scale, the findings of this thesis can also contribute to our understanding of post-conflict societies, and in particular, of the peculiar ways through which a conflict’s resolution has been envisioned outside of formal institutions. By not merely supporting inter-communal reconciliation, but further offering an ethical legitimization for a reunified federal Cypriot polity, Cypriotism presents an interesting contemporary example where the resolution of a conflict has been envisioned primarily through reunification and inter-communal coexistence, rather than partition and communal separatism.

It should be noted that no sociological research can ever truly exhaust its object of analysis. While offering a comprehensive discussion of the ideas expressed by Cypriotism in the 21st century Republic of Cyprus, this thesis entails a series of limitations which should be properly recognised and outlined. The first limitation that is immediately observable is the thesis’ exclusive focus on expressions of Cypriotism within the Greek Cypriot community. As it has already been explored in the discussion on the literature surrounding Cypriotism, we cannot simply extend findings located within one ethnic community unto the other, since each community is situated within a different political, social, and economic context. Thus, the need to conduct comprehensive research on Turkish Cypriot expressions of Cypriotism remains. Such an analysis should explore these expressions in detail and in their own right, rather than depend on findings and insights developed in this thesis. Nonetheless, this thesis can offer a firm basis upon which comparisons can potentially be drawn, by identifying the extent to which Turkish Cypriot expressions of Cypriotism converge and diverge from their

Greek Cypriot counterpart in relation to political discourse, ideological aims, and notions of Cypriotness.

Another limitation of this thesis rests on its focus on a set of ideas, rather than on the unfoldment of political praxis. To the extent that ideas do in fact inform political activity, this thesis has certainly widened our understanding of Cypriotist politics. However, the relationship between political ideas and their translation into political action is a complex one, with the latter not being readily derivable from the former. An understanding of Cypriotist political activity therefore necessitates research focusing specifically on such an activity. Future research aiming to examine these dimensions of Cypriotism would also have to utilise an alternative methodology to the one employed for the purposes of this thesis, with ethnography appearing more suitable for such an endeavour.

Future research can further expand beyond political action to encompass cultural production, exploring how Cypriotism has been expressed, articulated, and codified through films, literature, music, and cultural festivals. Cultural production has been notably accelerating in Cyprus during the past two decades, providing a rich collection of resources for future analysis. More ambitiously, future research could also explore shifts in the production of knowledge itself, examining how different ideological frameworks have affected the articulation of normative readings and interpretations surrounding the perceived nature of the island's identity.

Lastly, future research could explore how Cypriotism has emerged and developed historically. While this thesis offers a detailed account of the key ideas entailed within Cypriotism, its findings are constrained to a specific historical period, capturing the expressions of Cypriotism particular to it. A holistic understanding of the phenomenon necessitates its historicization within the broader processes of national homogenisation and state formation unfolding in Cyprus during the 19th and 20th centuries. The formulation of such an analysis is a complex sociological endeavour, entailing an attentive utilisation of a rich array of secondary literature available to us from the fields of history, sociology and anthropology, the careful employment of concepts surrounding nationalism, identity formation and the state, and the mindful engagement with primary sources presently available in formal and informal archives. While a complicated affair, it remains my conviction that it is only through the production of a historical sociology of Cypriotism, that we can truly firmly grasp its internal logic and dynamics.

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12. Appendices

Appendix A: Adapting Methodology to an Ever-Changing Field

The following text originates from an early draft of the methodology chapter, which was submitted to my supervisors while still undertaking research in the field. The draft itself drew extensively on insights and observations recorded in my research diary. Beyond offering a detailed record of the challenges faced during data collection, it is also retained here with the hope that it will be of use to future researchers interested in the various ways doctorate students and academics attempted to address the effects of the covid-19 pandemic on social research.

The original research design aimed to incorporate three independent sets of interrelated data, consisting of documents, data generated from participant observation and face-to-face in-depth interviews. Documentary data would have consisted mainly of leaflets, magazines, brochures and online articles published and circulated in the Republic of Cyprus from 2000 onwards, with an additional emphasis placed on documents produced during the data collection period. Participant observation aimed to focus on public protests and cultural events, generating data from the writing of notes and vignettes; as well as from the taking of photographs. Observation was further expected to act as a steppingstone towards locating individuals for in-depth interviewing, connecting the research population to the political and cultural developments unfolding during the data collection period, contrasting and evaluating the generated data with documentary data produced during the past 20 years. The possibility that the original research design would have had to be altered during the data collection period was discussed and kept in mind prior to my arrival in Cyprus, as the effects of the covid-19 pandemic, combined with the unpredictable ways through which different governments were responding to it, indicated that the situation could radically change over a short period of time, affecting the efficiency of specific research methods, as well as the possibility of utilizing them effectively in an ever-changing political environment.

In contrast to the United Kingdom, Cyprus maintained a low level of covid-19 transmission and hospitalization during the summer and early autumn of 2020, while the tracing system put in place to locate and isolate positive cases was still effectively functioning after the summer. Despite the wearing of masks in particular contexts, such as grocery shopping, or the enforcement of epidemiological guidelines in specific social gatherings, everyday life

appeared to have had returned more or less back to normalcy. This normalcy was nonetheless in many ways restricted to everyday social interactions, as the policies enforced during the spring lockdown of 2020 had left their mark on the political activity I aimed at investigating, while the policies and measures enforced throughout the following year affected directly both political activities, as well as the original methodology of the research. In order to present adequately the choices and methodological adaptations made during the data collection period, a brief contextualization of the conditions encountered in the field need to be presented, especially the way through which the government of the Republic of Cyprus chose to deal with the covid-19 pandemic.

The first measure announced by the Cypriot government in late February of 2020 was the partial closure of checkpoints across the buffer zone that divides the island, leaving access to the Republic of Cyprus from other routes, unrestricted. This closure of checkpoints was an unprecedented move since their initial opening in 2003; and was quickly perceived as a political, rather than an epidemiological decision on the part of the government, triggering a bi-communal protest at the Ledra Street checkpoint in Nicosia, during which peace activists broke through police lines and symbolically 'reopened' the checkpoint for a day. A second protest was met with increased police presence, which blocked by force the repetition of last protest's development and led to the pepper-spraying of Turkish Cypriot activists by Greek Cypriot policemen. Soon afterwards, the Republic entered one of the strictest lockdowns in the European Union, shutting down all non-essential businesses and restricting movement through the use of an SMS system originally utilized in Greece. Citizens and permanent residents were expected to send an SMS containing their identification number, their postal code and a predefined code specifying one of the permitted reasons for going out, in order to be allowed to leave their home for a fixed number of times per day. Employers were further expected to fill in forms for their employees, in order for them to be allowed to go to work. In the occasion of being checked by a police patrol, failure to present an approved SMS response or a proper employee form carried a 300 euro fine. Furthermore, restrictions were placed on the number of SMS messages sent per day (either one or two, depending on the intensity of the lockdown), with each assumed to be carrying a 3-hour limit. In addition, all checkpoints and airports were closed, protests and any other public activities were prohibited, military personnel were integrated in the policing of the population and a night curfew was imposed. A repatriation system was introduced subsequently, with Cypriot citizens and permanent residents stranded abroad being permitted to return; on the condition that they

accept to be mandatory tested upon arrival, to pay the cost for the necessary PCR tests and to be quarantined in hotel rooms for two weeks, under the watchful eyes of soldiers and police officers.

The legal basis upon which these measures were taken rested on a forgotten British colonial law, which provided the Minister of Health with the power to declare any germ as an 'infectious disease'; and to publish subsequently decrees containing legally enforceable regulations, for its containment. While the legality of the law itself, as well as that of particular decrees, was openly questioned by lawyers, the Cyprus Bar Association and Amnesty International over the course of the following year, with particular emphasis placed on the unjustifiable total restriction and/or abolition of specific constitutional and fundamental human rights, no effective legal or political challenge was made during my stay in Cyprus, leaving the executive branch of government to effectively rule the country via decree, without any significant restrictions or any parliamentary oversight.

Beyond the political and legal implications of this arrangement, this mode of governance affected everyday life on a practical level, as no systematization of epidemiological measures was ever attempted, as was, for example, the case with the Tier system in the United Kingdom. Any type of measure could be announced at any particular moment with no co-ordination with broader civil society, expected to be enforced with little hindsight by affected parties, such as the police, public schools, hospitals or businesses; and could last for an undefined amount of time, despite initial ministerial statements defining their enforcement for a couple of weeks. Conditions could thus change at any given time with no prior notification, leading to a constant uncertainty over the immediate future, leaving no possibility for planning ahead of possible new restrictions.

While the first lockdown was lifted in the end of May of 2020, checkpoints remained essentially inaccessible, as a negative PCR test carried out in the last 72 hours had to be presented to both Turkish and Greek Cypriot police in order to cross, despite some limited exceptions on humanitarian grounds. In addition, holding public protests remained prohibited until late August, despite the opening of all other public, social, cultural and economic activities in June. As a result, a general inertia took over in relation to grassroots reunification politics, with the protests taking place after March of 2020 focusing on other issues, such as institutional racism, state authoritarianism and governmental corruption. As was the case with

other countries across the globe, a number of protests were also held by covid-19 deniers and anti-maskers.

I arrived on the island in early September of 2020. After having a PCR test upon arrival, I self-isolated for a week on a mountain house as a precaution, waiting to have a second PCR test on my own initiative, in order to be certain that my first test did not return a false negative result. I then moved on to make accommodation arrangements, renting a flat with two acquaintances at a walking distance from the partitioned walled city of Nicosia, an area characterized by (generally) left-leaning extra-parliamentary and pro-reunification political activities during the past decade. The location enabled me to carry out my data collection without the need of driving a car, which would otherwise have been a necessity in a city characterized by limited public transport networks.

Despite the benefit of location, data collection began with a clear disadvantage, linked to the ongoing closure of the checkpoints. On a first level, I had essentially lost access to the territory north of the island's buffer zone, as there was no indication that checkpoints would reopen in the foreseeable future. On a second level, the closure of checkpoints resulted in an ongoing political inactivity from the reunification movement, limiting the gathering of data from participant observation, while also restricting the identification of potential interview participants, as the original research design aimed to connect interviewees with the political activity developing in the field. In addition, while cultural events were still taking place when I arrived, they quickly began to fade out with the increasing of positive cases from October of 2020, a development that was met with a seemingly never-ending publication of confusing decrees by the Ministry of Health.

During the first three months of fieldwork, I thus began to make small adjustments to the original research strategy, in order to adapt to the conditions encountered in the field. Instead of abandoning participant observation altogether I decided to expand its scope, by participating in public protests either organized, or participated by the extra-parliamentary left, with the reserved hope that some of the data produced could eventually be of some use to my topic of inquiry. Given the fluidity of the situation in Cyprus, I began to also write short chronological entries in a digital journal, noting down dates of protests, relevant links to newspaper articles and the various shifts in epidemiological regulations, in order to keep track of key developments for potential subsequent reference. I further placed additional emphasis on collecting documentary data, since documents were more readily accessible and

could be collected relatively quickly, forming a substantial dataset upon which I could depend upon, if all other data collection strategies failed. Having carried out social research on relevant topics during my undergraduate and postgraduate studies, I already had the benefit of a network which could assist me in locating desirable documents, which mostly consisted of political magazines, brochures and leaflets spanning a good 20 years.

Having established a respectable collection of documentary data by the beginning of November, I began reconsidering the original research design, in light of the limited data being generated through participant observation at that time. While I had participated in numerous protests, ranging from anti-corruption marches and anti-racist symbolic actions; to mass protests against state authoritarianism, this political activity was not directly linked to my research topic as such. Nonetheless, in numerous instances pro-reunification groups did attempt to link Greek Cypriot nationalism and the ongoing partition of the island with more immediately pressing matters, such as anti-immigration policies and high-level corruption, mainly through the use of banners, chants, and leaflets. Data generated from such instances was interesting and relevant; but was not sufficient to constitute them as a dataset of equal weight to documentary data. Given the situation, I decided to continue participant observation but reduce the emphasis on observation in the research design, as the development of political activity relevant to the focus of the research remained unpredictable within the context of the pandemic. The reintroduction of an absolute ban on protests in November of 2020 further suggested that participant observation would remain an unreliable method in the foreseeable future. As there was no longer any expectation that data generated from participant observation would be sufficient to form a dataset of equal weight in its own right, the focus shifted on documentary data on the one hand, and in-depth face-to-face interviews on the other.

An interview guide was designed and finalized in co-ordination with my supervisors by the beginning of December 2020 (Appendix C). As interviewees were to be identified and contacted through participant observation, linking the research population to the ongoing political developments, I contacted potential participants through the network established through participant observation, aiming to pilot the interview guide through two in-depth interview sessions, evaluate the data generated and alter the interview guide accordingly. Nonetheless, the initiation of interviewing co-incited with two developments directly affecting data gathering.

The first development was the sudden implementation of new regulations restricting face-to-face interaction in multiple contexts, as well as the enforcement of a 21:00-05:00 o'clock curfew, compressing the available free time of participants significantly. While the Republic of Cyprus was not yet formally in a new lockdown, the hospitality sector was closed, visits to other homes were forbidden; and access to open public spaces was restricted to 2 people, on the precondition of wearing masks and keeping distances, with a violation of any regulation carrying the usual 300 euro fine. The second development was a significant increase in covid-19 infections, which had begun to accelerate dangerously during the winter months, leading to increased hospitalizations and media reports of an impending new lockdown. The second nationwide lockdown was eventually enforced in mid-January of 2021, reintroducing the SMS system (with a limitation of two outings per day) and a ban on households mixing, with the exception of two people from different households meeting strictly for exercise in specific public spaces.

Carrying out face-to-face interviews within this context raised significant ethical questions, as meeting with participants placed them in a vulnerable position in relation to potential police harassment and persecution, while the increased risk of viral transmission accompanying the depreciating epidemiological situation made face-face interactions increasingly ethically questionable. In addition, the unpredictability through which measures were being introduced, retracted and altered for most of the year did not allow for long-term planning in relation to carrying potential face-to-face interviews in the future, as a seemingly stable set of measures could be overturned in a couple of days without prior notice. As carrying face-to-face interviews became an increasingly remote possibility, three different scenarios were considered to address the aforementioned concerns and restrictions.

The first was the removal of participant-generated primary data from the research design all together. Such an approach would have focused primarily on documentary data, with participant observation generating additional, complimentary data, the quality and quantity of which would depend on subsequent developments in the field. The second was the retainment of in-depth interviews as part of the research design through the utilization of video chat technology; while the third was the replacement of in-depth interviews with qualitative surveys, allowing for participants to provide answers to a series of open-ended questions in written form. As the data collection period was still in its early stages, the first scenario was retained as a backup plan, to come into effect only if no sufficient participant-generated primary data were collected by the formal data gathering end date. Relevant methodological

literature was reviewed in relation to the other two subsequent scenarios, to explore their particular strengths and limitations in relation to the specific conditions present in Cyprus due to the covid-19 pandemic.

The employment of qualitative surveys posed certain limitations in comparison to in-depth interviews, such as the lack of asking follow-up questions on the spot, or of adapting questions and directing the discussion according to participants' responses, since qualitative surveys consist of fixed questions that allow no subsequent alteration. Despite these limitations, qualitative surveys were overall preferred to online interviews on several practical and methodological grounds. Overall, the conversion of a face-to-face interview session to an online format, within the context expected to be carried out, was judged to pose methodological limitations, as a number of key elements characterizing a standard face-to-face in-depth interview were anticipated to be absent.

A first concern was that because of government-imposed limitations on free movement, individuals were restricted to their homes, removing the flexibility on the part of the participant to decide the setting of the interview, a flexibility that is generally considered fundamental in creating the appropriate environment for the carrying out of a successful interview session. The enforcement of the 21:00-05:00 o'clock night curfew further restricted participation to the curfew hours, as individuals prioritized their after-work time for grocery shopping, socialization through exercise, leisure and other personal obligations. This in turn raised concerns over the mental exhaustion of potential participants, as well as concerns over the privacy of the sessions, as the combination of limiting free movement and enforcing a curfew meant that other members of a participant's household would be present during the interview session, either within the participant's home or within the room, potentially affecting responses provided by the participant. Although a secondary issue in relation to the concerns outlined above, online interviews would further restrict the use of body language by the interviewer, which under proper conditions can act as a useful tool for the successful flow of an interview session. Qualitative surveys dispelled with most of these concerns, as participants would be able to fill in their answers in their own chosen time, space and pace, sometimes over multiple sittings. Qualitative surveys offered a number of other practical advantages as well, such as the elimination of transcription from the data-collection process and the carrying out of multiple surveys over the same period of time, reducing significantly collection and processing time.

It is important to note that qualitative surveys are not interviews in a written form, but an alternative qualitative method in its own right, generating a different form of qualitative data. Thus, where participants' responses in interviews tend to be more informal and spontaneous, answers provided through qualitative surveys tend to be more dense, direct and reflective. In addition, the relevant distance from the researcher felt by participants tends to generate data that would otherwise not be generated from interview sessions, especially if the survey addresses more sensitive topics. The two methods also differ significantly in technique. Approaches that are appropriate in the designing of an interview guide might well be inefficient in the designing of a qualitative survey and vice versa, as is also the particular structure, wording and presentation of questions within each medium. Taking these facts into consideration, the interview guide was not directly converted into a survey format. Instead, the qualitative survey (Appendix B) was designed primarily through the consideration of insights, suggestions and techniques available in the relevant methodological literature, with the aim of making the best of the method's strengths. The original qualitative survey was designed in English and subsequently translated into Greek, in order to offer both options to participants, as would had been the case if in-depth interviews were pursued.

Appendix B: English Version of the Qualitative Survey

The margins and formatting of the survey were readjusted, in order to conform to the thesis' relevant presentation requirements. Participants were given more space to respond than what is reflected in the following replication of the qualitative survey.

Survey on the Cyprus Problem and identity in Cyprus

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey, which consists of 8 questions surrounding Cyprus. Please feel free to take your time and answer the questions at your own pace. Do not worry for any spelling or grammar mistakes, as they do not affect the contribution of your answers. Feel free to answer in the language of your choice, including in any of the Cypriot dialects. You can also write your answers in Greeklish, if that is more convenient for you. If you have filled an answer box and wish to write a longer answer to a question, you can do so by continuing to write. The box should adjust itself automatically.

Please do consult the *Participant Information Leaflet* sent to you alongside this survey, which outlines general information surrounding the research project, including how the collected data will be utilized. As outlined in the leaflet, your anonymity will be preserved throughout the research. To submit the completed survey or to ask any questions please send an email to [email address].

Background Information

Age: ☐18-24 years old ☐25-34 years old ☐34-44 years old ☐45-54 years old ☐Over 55	**Education (please specify highest level):** ☐Some High School ☐High School ☐Bachelor's Degree ☐Master's Degree ☐Ph.D. or higher ☐Prefer not to answer
Gender: ☐Male ☐Female ☐Prefer not to answer ☐Other, please specify:	**Cypriot Community:** By 'Cypriot community' we are here referring to the ethnic communities and religious groups formally recognized in the 1960 constitution of the Republic of Cyprus. Your views on identity form an integral part of this survey and you will be given the opportunity to expand on them later on. ☐Greek Cypriot ☐Turkish Cypriot ☐Maronite Cypriot ☐Armenian Cypriot ☐Latin (Catholic) Cypriot ☐Prefer not to answer ☐Other, please specify:

1. In your view, what are some of the most important political principles guiding your political activity? Please expand.

2. What do you think are the central barriers to the reunification of Cyprus? Please give an answer that best reflects your own perspective.

3. To what extent do you believe reunification is possible today and how would you ideally envision a reunified Cyprus?

4. What are your thoughts on the predominance of Greek and Turkish nationalism in Cyprus? Please expand.

5. What are your views in relation to the reunification of the island under the negotiated federal model (bi-zonal, bi-communal federation)?

6. What significance (if any) do you think bi-communal initiatives, such as bi-communal political organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and social spaces have in the process of reunifying the island?

7. In your view is there a Cypriot identity specific to the island, and if so, how would you describe or define it? Please provide as much detail as you can.

8.Would you describe yourself as a Cypriot, a Greek/Turkish Cypriot, a Greek/Turk or in any other way, and why? Please take your time answering.

Thank you for taking the time to answer the questions of this survey!

Appendix C: Unused Interview Guide

a) Introductions

- Informing the interviewee about the topic in more detail.
- Remind interviewee that anonymity will be kept throughout the research and that at any point they can stop the interview.
- Ask if the interviewee has any questions.

b) Open-ended Questions

Political Beliefs

1. How did you come to participate in political initiatives?

2. Do you hold specific political principles that guide your political activity?

➢ Follow up Question, depending on answer: Do you adhere to any specific political ideology?

3. What are your views on the predominance of Greek and Turkish nationalism in Cyprus?

Expectations

4. In your view, what are the central barriers to the reunification of Cyprus?

5. What are your views in relation to the reunification of the island under the much-discussed federal model?

6. To what extend do you believe reunification is possible today?

7. How would you ideally envision a reunified Cyprus?

Bi-Communalism & Identity

8. How significant do you consider bi-communal structures (bi-communal political organizations, NGOs and other initiatives) in the process of reunifying the island?

➢ Follow up Question: In relation to a potential post-reunified Cyprus?

9. In your view, is there a Cypriot identity specific to the island, and if so, how would you describe it?

10. Would you describe yourself as a Cypriot, a Greek/Turkish Cypriot or a Greek/Turk, and why?

c) Cool-down

- In case it is needed, sum what has been said to see if there is anything that needs further clarification.
- Ask the interviewee is there is anything else they would like to add.
- Gather relevant demographic information (Age/Gender/Education Level).
- Reassure them that anonymity will be maintained throughout.

d) End of Interview

- Thank the interviewee and start packing up.
- Be aware of any potential last comments by the interviewee.